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Evidence of Human Depravity.

HISTORY and obſervation afford abundant evidence of the truth of the ſcripture account of the depravity of human nature. They are an unexceptionable com ment on the ſacred text. God has pleaſed, in the progreſs of time, to place men in a great variety of ſituations, calculated, in various degrees, to bring out to view their true character; and he will continue to vary thoſe ſituations, in future, until it is as fully diſcloſed as the nature of the divine government requires. Thus, not only individuals, for the period of their lives, but the whole race as ſuch, from the fall to Chriſt's ſecond coming, are in a ſtate of probation. During this period the heart of man will be fully proved; and it will appear, from fact and experience, that it is *deceitful above all things and deſperately wicked. God will be found to be true, but every man a liar.*

To attain the ends of this trial and probation of human nature, fully, a long period of time ſeems neceſſary, and during its progreſs, a certain degree of order among men is requiſite; for, without this, the race of man itſelf would be exterminated, and no opportunity would remain for the diſpenſations of divine mercy. Hence the neceſſity of great and powerful reſtraints on the luſts and paſſions of men. In providing theſe, at different times, and in degrees ſuited to the courſe of events fixed in the divine counſels, the power, wiſdom and goodneſs of God are wonderfully diſplayed. In viewing the character of man, however, under the operation of ſuch reſtraints we are apt to form concluſions too much in his favor; for by means of them, no doubt, much wickedneſs is prevented, and a ſemblance of goodneſs is often exhibited; ſtill, as they produce their effect by laying a force upon, and not by changing the inclinations of the heart, they ought to be laid wholly out of the queſtion, in forming an eſtimate of the human character. In proportion as theſe are withdrawn, the naked human heart appears. And in order to diſcover it to the view of finite minds, God is pleaſed, from time to time, to withdraw thoſe reſtraints, as far as the ſtate of things will admit.

Among the countleſs reſtraints which limit the reign of wickedneſs are, natural conſcience, or a moral ſenſe, common to men, by which they diſtinguiſh between right and wrong, with the comfort or remorſe which purſues the ſentence it paſſes on our moral conduct, accompanied with a pre-ſentiment of future retribution—a conviction that the judgment of God will be according to truth and righteouſneſs—a hope, reſulting from revelation, tradition, or the expreſſions of the divine benignity, of appeaſing God's anger and conciliating his favor, by our ſervices and offerings—remarkable judgments with which God has viſited a wicked world, and in which he has ſhewn his wrath and made his power known, to every age and nation—the ſhortneſs of human life after the deluge—a conſciouſneſs which all men feel of weakneſs and mutual dependence, the fear of evil from thoſe we injure, and a hope of good from thoſe we treat with juſtice and benevolence—civil government—the dread of ſhame, of loſs of reputation, health and intereſt, which is, more or leſs, connected with a courſe of vice; and the deſire of reputation and influence of health and affluence which uſually attend a courſe of virtue—pity, which, by a law of our nature, is excited by objects in diſtreſs—friendſhip, founded on a ſimilarity of taſtes and purſuits—the natural affections, which exiſt between thoſe, whom the God of order has called to act together in the moſt intimate connections, where the ſinful paſſions are apt to be brought into perpetual colliſion—the interfering purſuits of men which limit the ſphere of individual agency, and confine the effects of ſelfiſhneſs within narrower bounds; and, to mention no more, even the interfering luſts in the ſame heart, which limit each other, or ſubject the weaker to the predominant paſſion.

Such are the bands and cords by which Almighty God binds, in ſuch degree as he pleaſes, a race of apoſtate creatures, who refuſe to be united to him and to one another, in that charity which is the bond of perfectneſs.

God has been pleaſed however, for wiſe and holy purpoſes, in every age, and under every degree of light which has ſhone on the world, to remove theſe reſtraints, or ſome of them, from nations and from individuals, and in ſuch degree as to give ſufficient openings into the human heart.

It may be uſeful to illuſtrate, in the conduct of nations and of individuals, in a few particulars, theſe general obſervations.

It is an undoubted fact, that nations, in relation to each other, are under fewer reſtraints, than individuals, in a ſtate of ſociety, are: the former muſt be conſidered, in relation to each other, as individuals in a ſtate of nature, without any law to control them, but that of force or convenience. Power and right are, with them, conſidered and treated as the ſame thing. The weaker may, thro' fear, be induced to reſpect the rights of the ſtronger, but whenever by uniting their ſtrength or otherwiſe, the balance of power may be in their favor, they will ſhew the ſame diſregard to right as others. Add to this, individual reſponſibility for national injuſtice is very lightly felt, the ſtill ſmall voice of conſcience, which may whiſper in individuals, will be ſilenced by the voice of the nation; the diſhonor of national baſeneſs and perfidy will be felt to be more than

compenſated, by the ſplendor of victory and conqueſt, and the advantages reſulting from national aggrandizement. Accordingly, the nations which have ſhed moſt blood, have, in all ages, not excepting the preſent, been held the moſt renowned. Compacts and treaties with each other, though, among Pagans, the gods above and gods below, and among Chriſtians, the Holy Trinity, are called upon in the moſt ſolemn manner, to avenge their violation, are mere ſtraw and rotten wood; no one expects they will be maintained with good faith, even at the ſolemn moment of ratification; they are received as matters of neceſſity, uſe or convenience, and to be laid aſide, either with or without a pretext, when intereſt requires. The nations, conſidered as individuals or bodies politic, have been, with few exceptions, atrocious murderers, their feet have been ſwift to ſhed blood, and they have had no fear of God before their eyes.

This ſketch of the character of nations is ſupported by the repreſentations of them in the holy ſcriptures. The four great monarchies are there repreſented by four ferocious beaſts of prey; the Chaldean by a lion, the Perſian by a bear, the Grecian by a leopard, and the Roman by a beaſt, *ſui generis*, which had no prototype in nature, dreadful and terrible and ſtrong exceedingly, which had great iron teeth, which devoured, brake in pieces, and ſtamped the reſidue with the feet of it, and which had ten horns. Such is the true character of nations the moſt powerful and illuſtrious, whoſe great exploits, in laying waſte the world, have been celebrated in all ages ſince they figured upon the theatre of human affairs, by poets and hiſtorians, and indeed by mankind in general. And ſuch is the character of all other nations, ſo far as they have had power and opportunity to diſplay themſelves; and ſo true is the divine declaration, "*My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways.*" From the character of nations we may certainly infer the character of the body of the people or individuals which compoſe them; if theſe loved their fellow-men as they do themſelves, they would prevent the proſecution of unjuſt or cruel wars; and, if they had the fear of God before their eyes, they would find means to ſecure the faithful and religious obſervance of treaties; they are therefore, unleſs they manifeſt, in ſome proper way, their diſſent, guilty of all the fraud, injuſtice, cruelty, murder, perfidy and impiety, of the nation which they compoſe, and as individuals they muſt account to God the common Father of men. Why do they freely perpetrate ſuch horrid wickedneſs as members of a nation, which, perhaps, they would not do as individuals? Becauſe their temptations are greater, and their reſtraints leſs. Here then the human heart appears ſtript of diſguiſe. The ſame appears in the conduct of moſt kings and great men who are above, and of many mean and baſe men who are in ſome ſenſe below the cognizance of law. The former prove tyrants and oppreſſors; the latter, protected by their poverty and meanneſs, prove cheats, liars, thieves, drunkards and are addicted in general to what is called low vice. The infant of a ſpan long feels few reſtraints; if diſturbed in its enjoyments, it will ſhow that perverſe and wrathful temper which, ſtrengthened by time and left unreſtrained, will impel to murder;

it appears to be wholly ſelfiſh ; it will ſoon fight the breaſt that feeds it ; it never doubts, till taught the contrary by painful experience, that all things around were made to ſubſerve its intereſts and pleaſures ; it will fight the perſon who takes away its baubles, juſt as nations fight with one another on a like account ; if, by means of its ſickneſs or otherwiſe it is exceſſively indulged, it will, when able, ſoon fill the houſe with noiſe, and indiſcriminately deal its rage around ; the fondeſt endearments ſerve to nouriſh peeviſhneſs and pride, inſtead of gratitude and obedience If effectually reſtrained by a temperate parental authority, it will begin to feel its true ſituation, as related to thoſe around, and to conduct accordingly ; but if not, it will diſobey its parents, it will lie, it will ſoon liſp out oaths and imprecations, and ſhew that the poiſon of aſps is under its lips, and that its mouth is full of curſing and bitterneſs ; it will quarrel, and, in a word, will ruſh, with the whole force of nature, into all manner of vice, as opportunity preſents and age permits.

The force of natural conſcience is always diminiſhed as perſons advance in life, unleſs they are renewed, and in part ſanctified by the Spirit of God. Its genuine dictates are ſuppreſſed, and at laſt nearly or quite annihilated ; and if they, when advanced, maintain a decorous conduct, it muſt be owing to the operation of other reſtraints ; and this will be viſible to the eye of critical obſervation : But, in conſequence of the gradual diminution of this powerful reſtraint, there is obſervable, in moſt men, a gradual depreciation of character, until the luſts of the heart gain a great and viſible aſcendency. Such being the ſtate of things, how happy is it for the church and world, that God has reduced the life of man from near a thouſand years to threeſcore years and ten. Had it not been for this wiſe and gracious appointment, another deluge of water, or of fire, might, long ago, have been neceſſary to ſweep the world of its wicked inhabitants.

A man of boiſterous and unhallowed paſſions, when in the preſence of his prince, or other great man, and paying his court for ſome favor which he holds moſt dear, will be a paragon of gentleneſs and patience : But follow him, after the tumult within is raiſed to the higheſt violence, by ſome untoward events, to his own houſe ; and his paſſions, let looſe upon the unhappy objects around him, will overturn every thing in their courſe, and will diſplay a ſcene ten-fold more dreadful than that of conflicting elements. What is the matter now? Why reſtraints are removed, and the man acts out his nature freely. An aperture or opening is made into his heart, and we have a glimpſe of the dreadful object, which is always *naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.*

A perſon of impure deſires and wholly unſanctified, whoſe memory and fancy are the ſtore-houſe of filth and pollution, and whoſe underſtanding has been debaſed, and compelled, it may be, for a long time, to pander for ſenſe ; and all whoſe faculties are brutalized by ſenſual indulgencies, will, in the preſence of perſons of a different deſcription, aſſume the character of purity itſelf : But trace his ſteps to his cuſtomary haunts, or into retirement, covered with night and darkneſs, where no eye ſees him but that of an aſſociate in guilt, and the eye of Almighty God ;

or, perhaps, that of God alone: here I will close the scene, *for it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done by such in secret.* The reason of this conduct is plain, the eye of man, from whom he fears evil and expects good, is a restraint; but the eye of God from whom perhaps he expects nothing and fears nothing, is either no restraint, or not sufficient to prevent the guilty indulgence.

When a vicious and profligate course is attended with shame and infamy, vice will, for the most part, be driven into corners. In such a state of society, a wicked man, who nevertheless is conscious of enjoying a fair reputation, will be careful to preserve it, if he can do it, and still indulge his reigning propensity; if not, he will sooner or later give up his reputation, and he is then prepared to give the reins to his predominant inclination, and to sin, as it were, with a cart-rope. Such is the state of the notorious libertine, thief and drunkard; but when such like characters are greatly multiplied, so that vice is kept in countenance, and the benefit of a fair character is comparatively small, in the intercourse of society; especially, if the people have enjoyed great light and advantages for religion, the state of such a people must be viewed as nigh unto cursing.

Persons brought up in pious families, and under the restraints of well regulated society will usually be moral in their conversation; but place them in any situation where restraints are mostly taken off, and they may be expected, if unrenewed; to shew the bent of nature, and soon to become proficients in the school of vice.

Let reason be impaired by intemperance, and the foul and ferocious passions will rage without control; let it be impaired by old age, and the person, unless a radical change of temper has taken place, will be untractable, self-willed and passionate, so as to become a burden to all around him; and if he *has* experienced such a change, the remains of corrupt nature, in a like exhibition of it, to a certain degree, will be apparent; or let it be impaired by distraction, and the person will be imperious, or malicious, or profane, or obscene; or all of them at turns, as the propensities, apparent in those exercises, prevail. This last instance is as fair a trial of the native inclinations of the heart as any of the former; for, as those inclinations exist independently of reason, they will shew themselves as they really are, when reason is impaired, and no longer controls them.

Let dishonor be detached from a particular vice, and attached to to the opposite virtue, as, in the case of duelling, it is in the opinion of the world; and few men, except such as are not of this world, will be able to resist the temptation of giving or accepting a challenge to fight with sword and pistol, when the laws of honor, falsely so called, require it. Such as do this, and such as give countenance to it, and especially such, whose province it is to execute the laws on the atrocious offenders, and from a criminal complaisance to public opinion, neglect to do it, are all murderers; though they would resent the imputation with as much spirit as Hazael did, with an "*Is thy servant a dog that he should do this great thing*"?

The infidels of the present day are under fewer restraints than the ancient pagans; for these last had not abandoned, but only corrupted the worship of God, nor did they disbelieve a state of of future retri-

bution; but the former have wholly abandoned the worſhip of God, and moſt of them conſider death as an eternal ſleep: accordingly, they are more gigantic in wickedneſs than any of their predeceſſors who warred on heaven, they have boldly attacked all authority and power in heaven and on earth; and this they have done, under the full ſplendor of goſpel light, and ſhould they continue to increaſe in numbers and in power, as they have lately done, and ſhould they proceed to exterminate pity and the natural affections from the human breaſt, as inconſiſtent with their impious philanthropy, the miſeries which they have already produced, though they have filled one half of the world, will be but the beginning of ſorrows; and in their further progreſs they will prepare the way for the battle of the great day of God Almighty. But not to enlarge,

In view of this ſubject I will conclude by obſerving, that all the friends of God have great reaſon to be humbled in the reflection that they carry about them great remains of this common nature—to bleſs God that he has ſeen fit, in favor to his church, hitherto to lay under ſuch powerful reſtraints a race of apoſtate creatures, and to rejoice in the aſſured hope, that they will be continued ſo long, and ſo far as ſhall be neceſſary for the accompliſhment of the purpoſes of God in building up, compleating and glorifying the kingdom of his Son.

OMICRON.

Of the uſefulneſs of the Scripture doctrine of Election.

MANY, who admit the doctrine of particular Election to be contained in the holy ſcriptures, yet conſider it as unprofitable, if not dangerous. Had this been the ſenſe of the author of our holy religion, it never would have appeared there. But in a harmonious ſyſtem, ſuch as the bible contains, the uſe of particular doctrines may not readily be diſcerned, unleſs viewed in their connection with others to which they are related. Should we ſet aſide the doctrine of the entirely loſt, ruined ſtate of man—of the mere, ſovereign good pleaſure of God in his recovery—and, of the abſolute neceſſity of the ſupernatural influences of the Holy Spirit on the hearts of men, to prepare them for the goſpel-ſalvation; we could diſcover no uſe, or even place for the ſcripture doctrine of Election. But in connection with theſe doctrines, it is not difficult to diſcover, both its certainty, and its uſefulneſs. If the ſalvation of ſinners is to be reſolved ultimately into the mere ſovereign power and mercy of God as its cauſe, it will appear altogether correſpondent and ſuitable that God alone ſhould chooſe the veſſels of mercy. Accordingly,

1. It is difficult to ſuppoſe, that the ſinner ſhould become properly ſenſible of his really undone, helpleſs ſtate and condition, without a conviction that his recovery depends on the ſovereign pleaſure, and the electing love of God. Nothing is more obvious, than that our ſalvation muſt depend, either on ourſelves and ſuch exertions of ours as are compatible with our natural diſpoſitions, and with the moral powers we, all, poſſeſs; or, on the ſovereign power and grace of God. Between theſe, there is no medium. If, on the former, whoever obtains ſalvation *maketh himſelf to differ and hath whereof to glory.* If, on the latter, the re-

covery of the ſinner depends on the electing purpoſe and love of God. But when we attend to the character, which the holy ſcriptures give of the ſinner, and the repreſentations there made of the human heart, it will readily be ſeen, that no one, who imagines that his eternal ſalvation depends on any exertions, which it is compatible with his preſent diſpoſition to make, and will be connected with them, has any proper ſenſe of the really wretched, helpleſs ſtate and condition he is in. That conviction, which is of great importance to a right underſtanding of the nature and extent of goſpel mercy, and which uſually precedes converſion, implies ſuch a diſcovery of the wickedneſs and obſtinacy of our own hearts, as forces the concluſion upon us, that if we are ever brought to be willing to lie at the mercy of God, and love and rejoice in ſuch a ſalvation as is offered in the goſpel, it muſt be done, not only by a power foreign to our own, but by one which operates againſt all the natural biaſſes of our hearts, and overcomes them. This conviction ſtrongly impreſſes the ſinner's mind with a perſuaſion of his abſolute dependance on the ſovereign mercy and electing love of God for ſalvation.

And the ſcripture doctrine of Election is evidently calculated to produce this conviction—a conviction without which it cannot be, that we ſhould ever properly eſtimate the nature, and ſee the glory of that divine mercy, by which ſinners are ſaved.

2. That God has, of his ſovereign good pleaſure, elected a certain number of the human race to eternal life, is the only doctrine, which affords any ground of hope to the ſinner, when convinced of thoſe other ſcripture truths with which it is connected. Without a knowledge of this, a ſinner under proper conviction could find no ground of hope. Increaſing light will diſcover increaſing oppoſition of heart to God, and to the way of ſalvation by Chriſt. That, were the ſinner, who has any clear diſcovery of the ſtate of his own heart, to feel that it depended ultimately on himſelf—on the exertions of ſuch a heart as he now poſſeſſes, whether he ſhould ever comply with the propoſals of the goſpel, he would at once loſe all hope. The only conſideration, which will prevent deſpair, is, that God has mercy *becauſe he will have mercy*, and *on whom he will have mercy*. This muſt be ſo, becauſe it ſo evidently appears, from the word of God, that nothing ſhort of the mighty power and influence of the Holy Spirit ever brings the heart of the ſinner into the ſentiments of the goſpel. Since the ſufficiency of the atonement, and the free and rich offers of mercy, both, leave the ſinner's heart where they find it—under the entire dominion of ſin, the plan of ſalvation would be incomplete without the doctrine of Election. Were it not for thoſe ſaving purpoſes and that ſovereign mercy, which neceſſarily imply a particular election, a conviction in the conſcience of thoſe truths, which are clearly taught in the word of God, would leave the ſinner in a hopeleſs ſtate. Without this doctrine—without evidence, both of the power, and the purpoſe of Chriſt to *cauſe dead ſinners to hear his voice*, there could be no certainty that any one of the human race would be ſaved. Thus evidently is the doctrine of Election fitted to promote conviction, and at the ſame time to prevent deſpair.

3. The doctrine of Election gives an aſſurance, which could

not be had without it, that the greateſt good ſhall be accompliſhed, and the higheſt meaſures of felicity be the fruit of the glorious work of Redemption.

The good to be accompliſhed by the work of redemption, will be anſwerable to the wiſdom and love, which appear in this moſt glorious of all the works of God. That the ſalvation of a certain number and proportion of the human race will beſt ſatisfy *divine infinite love*, God himſelf has decided. This is evident, from the clear, explicit declarations of his holy word, that ſome of mankind ſhall periſh. But to aſcertain this number and proportion, is infinitely beyond the power of any, or all created beings. In the doctrine of Election we have aſſurance, that it is aſcertained, and moſt exactly aſcertained, by *infinite wiſdom and love*. God's ſaving mercy is the perfection and glory of infinite love. Where this appears to the greateſt advantage, there the higheſt good muſt be effected. Juſt as many, and no more, of the human race will be ſaved, as will exhibit the greateſt ſtrength, and witneſs the greateſt glory of divine, infinite love. Nor is it ſuppoſable that, without the higheſt meaſures of created holineſs and happineſs, *Chriſt* could ſee of the travail of his ſoul, and be *ſatisfied*. If, in the ſalvation of thoſe whom the Father has given him, the infinitely benevolent heart of the Redeemer will be *ſatisfied, love itſelf will be ſatisfied—goodneſs, the moſt perfect and infinite can deſire* no more: Nor is it ſuppoſable greater good ſhould be done by the ſalvation of men.

That God himſelf, in his infinite wiſdom, has aſcertained and choſen the number, whoſe final recovery and ſalvation will ſatisfy *his own love*—that love, which ſpared not his own Son, but freely gave him up for us all—is a certain evidence, that the greateſt good ſhall be accompliſhed.—That it is no more poſſible there ſhould be higher felicity and enjoyment in God's moral kingdom, than will in fact be effected by the work of redemption, than it is poſſible that the wiſdom which chooſes the veſſels of mercy, and the love which redeems and ſaves them, ſhould be exceeded. And yet, without the deciſion of infinite wiſdom in the caſe, the evidence could not be had that the higheſt and greateſt good will be the certain and everlaſting fruit of the glorious work of redemption.

4. Without the doctrine of Election, the evidence would be incomplete, that the ſalvation of ſinners reſults from the mere ſelf-moving love and mercy of God. Were the ſalvation of any to be independent of the electing love of God, where would be the evidence that *grace alone* originated and effected it? No ſcheme of doctrine gives ſo clear and lively a view of the glory and wonderfulneſs of divine wiſdom and love—the unſpeakable richneſs of divine mercy and grace, as that which repreſents men ſo ſunk and dead in ſin, that their recovery can be attributed to nothing, but the ſovereign power and mercy—the all conquering grace of God. And with this, the doctrine of particuticular election is cloſely and inſeparably connected—in this, it is neceſſarily implied. Where no diſtinction is made, in the beſtowment of favors, the ground on which they are beſtowed, is leſs diſtinguiſhable; and all ground of boaſting is not ſo evidently removed. Were there no ſelection, the evidence of mercy and ſelf-moving goodneſs,

in the beſtowment of favors, would be leſs viſible. Where there are no puniſhments, pardons will be leſs valued, and their nature and worth ill underſtood.

Beſides, no view of things like that, which beſt ſhows the eternal God to be moved purely by the goodneſs of his own nature, to the recovery of ſinners, and which attributes the whole and every part of their ſalvation to the mere mercy and grace of God, as their cauſe, is ſo fitted eternally to bind the heart in humble obedience and love, and raiſe it to high and delightful admiration of the glory of God as it ſhines in the face of Chriſt. No other ſcheme of doctrine lays the ſinner ſo low in his own view, and ſo abſorbs and ſwallows up his whole ſoul in love. Here a foundation is laid for the greateſt nearneſs to God, and the higheſt felicity in the enjoyment of him.

To ſet aſide the Scripture doctrine of particular Election, obſcures the whole ſyſtem of goſpel grace, and caſts a ſhade upon it. It takes away the only ground of hope from impenitent ſinners, and renders it utterly uncertain whether any will ever be ſaved. It obſcures the luſtre and glory of divine mercy, and leaves the iſſue of the preſent ſtate of things at the utmoſt uncertainty—depriving us of the evidence, that a good, worthy of *infinite love*, and anſwerable to the glorious diſplays which are made of divine power, wiſdom and mercy, in the creation, government, and redemption of the world, will ever be accompliſhed.

On the beſt manner of preaching the goſpel.

THE revelation of ſaving mercy to ſinners, through Jeſus Chriſt, is well termed goſpel, or good news. It may be ſummed up in the conciſe declaration, that "Jeſus Chriſt came into the world to ſave ſinners."* It is more fully expreſſed in the divine teſtimony, that "God ſo loved the world that he gave his only begotten ſon that whoſoever believeth in him ſhould not periſh but have everlaſting life."† But in whatever form of words it is ſummarily expreſſed, a proper explanation will ſhew that it involves many moſt intereſting and important truths, relating to God, his perfections, character, government, and grace;—relating to man, as a creature and ſubject of God, and as a ſinner againſt him;—relating to Jeſus Chriſt, in his wonderful perſon, the union of his divine and human natures, his mediatorial character, offices, and work;—relating to the application of redemption by the agency of the Holy Spirit, in the hearts of ſinners, in his renewing and ſanctifying influences, by which they are made willing in the days of God's power; are brought to repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; and thus become the ſubjects of pardoning grace, and are kept by the power of God, through faith to ſalvation.

It pleaſed God in the riches of his mercy to ſinful man, to inſpire a number of choſen witneſſes, to commit to writing, the ſyſtem of Chriſtian truth, as far as was requiſite for the communication of ſaving knowledge, and thus to furniſh the world with the ſacred ſcriptures, which are able to make us wiſe to ſalvation, through faith in Chriſt Jeſus.

That nothing might be wanting, in point of means, he hath graciouſly inſtituted the preaching of the

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* 1 Timothy, i. 15. † John iii. 16.

goſpel, and appointed an order of men, in the Chriſtian church, to addreſs their fellow-ſinners, on the great concerns of religion, and the world to come; to explain and inculcate the truths, duties, and proſpects opened in the goſpel; to proclaim, from the ſcriptures, the glad tidings of ſalvation to penitent, believing ſinners through the atonement of Chriſt; and to warn the impenitent and unbelieving of the wrath to come.

So important, ſo glorious and awful are the effects of this miniſtry, that the apoſtle, when ſpeaking of himſelf and his fellow labourers ſays, "We are unto God a ſweet ſavor of Chriſt in thoſe who are ſaved, and in thoſe who periſh. To the one we are a ſavor of death unto death, and to the other of life unto life;" and adds (in which every ſerious preacher of the goſpel will join him.) "*Who is ſufficient for theſe things?*"*

The preceding obſervations tend to ſhew the importance and ſolemnity of the Chriſtian miniſtry, as it reſpects the preachers of the goſpel, and thoſe who hear them, and are a ſufficient apology for this attempt to ſuggeſt a few thoughts on the beſt manner of preaching the goſpel.

The writer is ſenſible of his inability to treat the ſubject as he could wiſh. But he hopes, through divine aſſiſtance, to offer ſomething which may be uſeful, at leaſt, to young miniſters; and that, although he may ſuggeſt nothing new to the more experienced, he may be inſtrumental of "ſtirring up their pure minds by way of remembrance."

The following particulars appear to belong to the beſt manner of preaching the goſpel.

I. The Chriſtian miniſter muſt preach the goſpel *truly*.

This is to preach it as it is revealed in the holy ſcriptures, without any perverſion. God is, indeed, able to bring ſinners to the ſaving knowledge of himſelf, under the moſt corrupt teachers. But this is not his ordinary way; neither is corrupt and falſe teaching an inſtituted mean of grace and ſalvation, or adapted to the benefit of the hearers, but the contrary, for "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing *by the word of God.*"†

If preaching be the proper mean of ſalvation to the hearers, it is by the exhibition of divine truth to their underſtandings and hearts, thus they are "begotten through the goſpel," and the "paſtors after God's heart feed them with knowledge and underſtanding." This ſhews us that public, authoriſed preachers of the goſpel ſhould be men of ſuperior knowledge, in Chriſtianity, ſuch as are "able to teach others;" and excludes from the ſacred office, the weak and ignorant, and ſhows that they are not called of God, to this work, whatever their own opinion may be of their ability and their call.

It is equally manifeſt that heretical teachers are not to be encouraged, whatever abilities they may poſſeſs. Theſe do not *make manifeſt the myſtery of Chriſt as they ought to ſpeak* or *teſtify the truth as it is in Jeſus.* Eſpecially if their hereſy reſpect any of the principal doctrines of the goſpel. In that caſe, the apoſtle Paul repreſents them as preaching another goſpel, and denounceth againſt them the divine malediction.‡

This naturally excites the enquiry, what are thoſe eſſential truths of Chriſtianity which muſt be de-

* 2 Corinthians, ii. 16.

† Rom. x. 17. ‡ Gal. i. 8, 9.

clared if the preacher would, in any good meaſure, ſpeak as he ought?

To this it may be replied, that the Chriſtian ſyſtem is connected in all its parts. Theſe may be compared to ſo many links of a great chain let down from heaven. None of theſe truths can be denied or obſcured without injury to the Chriſtian ſyſtem.

Some are, however, more important and fundamental than others. Theſe may be differently ſtated and enumerated by different perſons, who equally regard divine truth.

To the writer, the following truths ſeem to be the moſt eſſential, in the foundation of Chriſtianity, viz.

The being, perfections, and unity of God, and his infinitely perfect mode of exiſtence, as a Triune Deity. The truth and divinity of the holy ſcriptures, of the old and new teſtament. The divinity and atonement of Chriſt. The juſtification of penitent, believing ſinners, through his mediatorial righteouſneſs. The total depravity of man, in conſequence of the original lapſe. The ſupernatural change of heart, by the agency of the Holy Spirit, in thoſe who believe to the ſaving of the ſoul, the ſovereignty and freedom of divine grace, in the ſalvation of ſinners, diſplayed in time, according to the eternal purpoſe of God.

The nature and neceſſity of Chriſtian holineſs, and its unfailing connection with the faith of the goſpel, in thoſe who are ſaved. And the retributions of eternity, to the righteous and the wicked.

The preacher who enters deeply into theſe important truths of the goſpel, will not, it may be hoped, eſſentially pervert any other; and the hearer whoſe principles and manners are formed on them, will "go on in grace, and in the knowledge, of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt."

II The Chriſtian miniſter muſt preach the goſpel *plainly*.

This implies that he preſent to his hearers the truths of Chriſtianity, in language, eaſy to be underſtood by them, that inſtead of uſing ambiguity of language, or general and indeterminate aſſertions, he make it a leading object, next to preaching the ſimple truths of the goſpel, to do it in a manner adapted to the capacity of his hearers, that they may underſtand him. With the apoſtle Paul, he will prefer ſpeaking "five words, in the church, with his underſtanding, that he may edify others, to ten thouſand words in an unknown tongue."* He muſt not only avoid that ſtudied ambiguity by which unfaithful teachers aim at eſcaping the offence of the croſs, and ſeek to pleaſe carnal hearers, but he muſt ſtudy that plainneſs of addreſs which will render his meaning intelligible to his common hearers, that they may be inſtructed, convinced and edified

Cutting is the reproof of the apoſtle in the paſſage juſt mentioned, to the preacher who is more concerned to commend himſelf to his hearers, as an able, learned, or eloquent man, than to commend the truth as it is in Jeſus But moſt of all doth the awful cenſure fall on the faithleſs timeſerver, who hides himſelf under general and ambiguous language, to avoid the truth. Such may well be ranked with "falſe apoſtles, and deceitful workers, who by good words and fair ſpeeches deceive the hearts of the ſimple."†

* 1 Cor. xiv. 19. † Rom. xvi. 18. and 2 Cor xi. 13.

III. The Chriſtian miniſter muſt preach the goſpel *demonſtratively*

His preaching ſhould be "in the demonſtration of the ſpirit, and of power,"† as diſtinguiſhed from the enticing words of human wiſdom, that the faith of his hearers "may not ſtand in the wiſdom of man, but in the power of God." For this purpoſe he needs a deep and extenſive acqaintance with the Chriſtian ſyſtem—much and well choſen reading—and much ſtudy and prayer, that his views of truth may be clear, and his reaſoning, concluſive; and that not merely, to the man of ſcience, and the well ſtudied divine; but to his attentive and ſerious hearers of common capacity. Theſe conſtitute the great body of thoſe who hear him, and among theſe he muſt look for his principal ſucceſs. His arguments muſt therefore be both concluſive and plain. To this end, much depends on the connexion of the parts of his diſcourſe, and the due arrangement of his thoughts.

Nothing is here mentioned touching the manner of ſpeaking moſt conducive to ſucceſs. Books of oratory are common, and may be conſulted with advantage. Among theſe, profeſſor Blair's lectures, and Dr. Fordyce's art of preaching deſerve particular notice.

After all, to the preacher poſſeſſed of proper abilities and information, and who feels the weight and importance of divine things, the ſubject will inſpire an ardor and pathos, more adapted to impreſs the truth on the minds of his hearers, and affect their hearts, than all the accompliſhments of art, without it.

The leading truths of religion already named, muſt be often clearly ſtated and urged, and the whole ſyſtem of Chriſtian truth and duty, connected with them, muſt be brought into view.

Divine truth, exiſting in the mind and reſting on its mere evidence, is inſtrumental, through the divine bleſſing, to convince and convert the ſinner; to detect the hypocrite; and to edify the true Chriſtian. It is no leſs adapted to ſtop the mouths of gain-ſayers, to ſilence unruly and vain talkers, and bring them to the acknowledgement of the truth. Not indeed without a powerful divine agency attending the word of truth.

Without this Paul may plant and Apollos water, in vain. But this affords no juſt objection againſt the uſe of divinely inſtituted means, or the leaſt ground to expect that agency in the neglect of them.

IV. The Chriſtian miniſter muſt preach the goſpel *boldly*. Thus the apoſtle Paul requeſted the prayers of the Epheſians, that he might "open his mouth *boldly*, to make known the myſtery of the goſpel—that therein he might ſpeak *boldly*, *as he ought to ſpeak*."*—This boldneſs is eſſential to the right performance of his duty, as a preacher of the goſpel, in diſtinction from a governing concern to pleaſe men, or obtain the approbation of the moſt reſpectable hearers, (however deſirable when the fruit of fidelity.)

The fear of man muſt never ſhut his mouth, from declaring the whole counſel of God, in the moſt clear, ſolemn and demonſtrative manner. He muſt keep back nothing, profitable to them, even whether they will hear or forbear, remembering that he is the ſteward of God, and to him he muſt ſhortly give an account.

† 1 Cor. ii. 4.

* Epheſ. vi. 19, 20.

This boldneſs however, is widely different from that ſelf-ſufficiency and overbearing authority which have been, in ſome inſtances miſtaken for it, and by which evil men have done much hurt to the cauſe of God and the ſouls of their hearers. The former is the reſult of deep impreſſions of the preſence and authority of God, the worth of ſouls, the preciouſneſs of goſpel truth and the importance of eternity. The latter indicates the abſence of all theſe, and ſhews a mind puffed up with religious pride and ſelf-conceit. The boldneſs dictated and inſpired by the goſpel is that freedom of thought and expreſſion which reſults from proper views of ſpiritual and divine objects. Theſe fill the mind with impreſſions of their infinite importance, and lay the creature low before God, and thus deliver him from the fear of man by filling him with the fear of God.

V. The Chriſtian miniſter muſt preach the goſpel with *humility*.

With this, indeed, he muſt do all things; it is an eſſential branch of genuine Chriſtianity. But it is peculiarly important in preaching the goſpel.

Humility reſults from right views of the divine character and government, and of our own character and ſtate. "I have heard of thee," ſaid an eminent ſaint, "by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye ſeeth thee, wherefore I abhor myſelf, and repent in duſt and aſhes."* Such was the effect of a clear diſplay of the divine fulneſs to holy Job, and ſuch will it ever be, to a heart prepared to embrace divine truth. The preacher, deeply impreſſed with a ſenſe of his own exceeding unworthineſs, is prepared to ſpeak honorably of God and Chriſt, and to addreſs his hearers in a manner adapted to impreſs their minds, and perſuade them to conſider their latter end; and thus he "commends the truth to their conſciences in the ſight of God."

VI. The Chriſtian miniſter muſt preach the goſpel in the ſpirit of *kindneſs*.

The pious and benevolent preacher, in his preparations for the public ſolemnites, will contemplate the worth of the ſoul of man, the malignity of ſin, the awfulneſs of divine wrath, the importance of eternity, and the wonderful love and grace of God, revealed in the goſpel, and brought to us through Jeſus Chriſt. All theſe ſubjects and eſpecially the laſt, will prepare him to feel the moſt tender benevolence to periſhing ſinners. He will therefore addreſs them from the fulneſs of his heart, with ardent longing for their ſalvation. Numerous and weighty are the motives to the kindeſt addreſs to the ſouls of his hearers. We add in the laſt place,

VII. The Chriſtian miniſter muſt preach the goſpel with *ſolemnity*.

This remark reſults from all which have preceded. The truths to be proclaimed are exceedingly ſolemn and weighty, as they reſpect the great things of God, and his wonderful love and grace to guilty man; they are ſolemn as they relate to the wonderful work of redemption by the obedience and death of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; and as they reſpect the joys and ſorrows of departed ſouls—the glorious and dreadful realities of the future and eternal ſtate, and as they reſpect the final condition of the preacher and his hearers, which will be decided forever, by the abuſe or improvement of this

* Job xlii. 5, 6.

momentary ſtate, for "Behold now is the accepted time. Behold now is the day of ſalvation."

The faithful watchman will preſerve his own ſoul, and may hope for the ſalvation of ſome, at leaſt, of his hearers, even all who receive the truth in love, and fly for refuge to the hope ſet before them. But the people of the unfaithful miniſter, who were not warned by him it is much to be feared, will die in their ſins, but their blood will be required at his hand.

How ſolemn and weighty is the miniſterial charge! May all who take it on them feel its importance, and be qualified for its duties; and may the chief ſhepherd and biſhop of ſouls aſſiſt them in their arduous work, and crown their labours with abundant ſucceſs!

PHILANDER.

An attempt to diſtinguiſh ſuch exerciſes as are the reſult of genuine religion, from ſuch as are falſe.

1ſt. TRUE religion implies *ſelf-acquaintance*, or a thorough conviction of the total depravity and ruin of human nature; and is the fruit of a *new* taſte, which takes a decided part againſt *ſelf-exaltation*, in favor of the divine perfections and government; while that counterfeit religion, which is ſelf-deluſive preſuppoſes ignorance of the human heart, conſequently is entirely deſtitute of *humility*, which flows from nothing but *ſelf-acquaintance*. The divine law, has never come with power to the conſcience, ſo that the ſubject is yet *alive* to himſelf, and *dead* to all proper views of God; and thoſe affections which he exerciſes are toward an *imaginary* being, an *idol-God of his own creating*.

2d. The true Chriſtian, while he entertains the moſt heart-felt loathing of his own original character, beholds, with ineffable complacence, the character of God, as forming a moſt perfect *contraſt* with his own. He is pained while his thoughts turn on himſelf as ſo vile and loathſome, but his heart is filled with exhilerating joy when he adverts to the tranſporting idea, that *infinite perfection fills the univerſe!* And that all this ſin and evil, ſhall be over-ruled, and its natural tendency ſo counteracted, as that infinite *good* ſhall be the glorious reſult. His ſoul is revived, his heart leaps within him; that he is encircled by *ſuch* a God; and he with unſpeakable delight yields himſelf to be diſpoſed of according to the dictates of this infinite perfection. While the fondly deceived and warm-hearted hypocrite, is delighted too, with the character of *his* God, (for there are "lords many.") He has gotten the idea which is inwrought into the conſtitution of the heart, that we are offenders. He therefore feels himſelf expoſed to the reſentment of an angry God; he is told that there is a door of relief opened for ſuch in the goſpel; and exclaims "*what marvellous—what aſtoniſhing goodneſs* that thus appears to reſcue from this infinite threatened evil!" While his ſoul melts with grateful affection toward *his deliverer and benefactor*.

3d. The true ſaint poſſeſſes a large, capacious benevolence, and embraces the *univerſe in his boſom*. His language is, "let the lord govern, and make ſuch arrangements as will iſſue in the higheſt poſſible good of his kingdom; let me be an happy inſtrument of promoting this bleſſed intereſt, be diſpoſed of in that very way, that will beſt anſwer that moſt benevolent purpoſe: *here* is my happineſs, in this

I will rejoice. I ſay not, that *I chooſe* miſery, or *fear* it, for I *cannot be unhappy, while ſuch a God reigns.*" But the *ſelfiſh* Chriſtian, if he may be called a Chriſtian, has his views and affections circumſcribed by the narrow boundaries of *ſelf*, or a *limited* ſphere of operation. The ſpirit of his prayer is "ſave *me and mine*, and do as thou wilt with the reſt." He has within him no ſentiment of delight in a general, diffuſive happineſs, the *good of others*. *This* is *peculiar* to the new creature, "except a man be born again," he has no *union* with, nor can he *enjoy* the kingdom of God.

4th. It is very obſervable, that the well-informed, ſelf-acquainted Chriſtian, talks very little of his *gratitude* to God in a view of his *benefits*, compared with the expreſſions, of the formal, or legal profeſſor; he is ſeldom conſcious to himſelf that he is indeed in the *preſent* exerciſe of this highly becoming grace. He ſees there is ample occaſion for it, but how to attain to it, he knows not. He never *premiſes*, in a view of wiſhed for mercy, that he will return a tribute of thankfulneſs on its reception, for he has been made deeply ſenſible of his abſolute *dependence* on God, and thoroughly feels that there is no foundation in *his* heart for an exerciſe of this grace, "for in him dwells *no good* thing." By comparing his feelings with the truth, he cannot but hope he poſſeſſes its *radical* ſpirit, but "WHEN ſaw we thee an hungered, &c. He mourns and laments over the ingratitude of his heart. This is a "body of death," under which he cries, "who ſhall deliver me." While the deluded formaliſt overflows with gratitude, almoſt continually; he can ſet apart days of thankſgiving, and have periodical and *annual* returns of this Chriſtian, but I fear, *mechanical* grace. May we be ſaved from deluſion—learn to *diſtinguiſh*; and remember that we are to be weighed in a balance, that may prove us *wanting!*

AMELIA.

Queſtions and Anſwers—by AMELIA.

Queſ. 1ſt. ON what ground, does the true Chriſtian *ſubmit* to, and *confide* in his God?

Anſ. From a firm belief that he will manage all things in the very beſt manner for his kingdom at large. He does not wiſh that his *individual* happineſs ſhould be conſulted, but derives his enjoyment from a purer, more refined ſource, to wit, the greateſt happineſs of intelligent nature—or the good of others.

Queſ. From whence originates the fancied ſubmiſſion of the ſelf-deluded hypocrite?

Anſ. From an apprehenſion that by it, he ſhall be a *gainer*. He is taught the indiſpenſible neceſſity of this exerciſe—that without it there can be no *ſafety* for him, he therefore, merely as a refuge from perſonal evil, *throws himſelf* into the hand of God. Not ſo the true Chriſtian, who confides, not by *neceſſity*, but of *choice*, ſeeing ample foundation for unlimited confidence in a being of abſolute perfection.

Queſ. What is the object of true gratitude?

Anſ. The true character of a holy God is the immediate object of true gratitude. That there is a being at the head of the univerſe poſſeſſing ſuch endowments as every way qualify him to make the moſt equal and perfect diſtribution of things, fills the benevolent heart with holy triumph; and *that he*

will make that very uſe of him, and all beſide, as moſt effectually to promote the very beſt ends, excites the pureſt and moſt exalted gratitude.

Queſ. What are the predominant features of ſelfiſh gratitude?

Anſ. It is founded on the ſuppoſed *partial* goodneſs of God. The ſelfiſh heart is peculiarly exerciſed by what he calls *redeeming love*, that Chriſt ſhould *ſuffer and die* for ſinners! What heart would not melt at the idea? But this love and gratitude are built on miſapprehenſion of the great mediatorial work. There never was *ſuch* an atonement exhibited, nor ſuch a Saviour provided, as the ſelfiſh heart forms to itſelf, while it idolizes the God of its own creating.

Queſ. Does not the true Chriſtian exerciſe gratitude in a view of the work of redemption?

Anſ. Yes, but he does it *underſtandingly*. That Chriſt has *magnified* the law and made it *honorable*—that he has *witneſſed* to its *righteouſneſs* and the *ill-deſert* of ſin, and ſealed it with his blood—fills him with joy unſpeakable. His heart attaches itſelf to Chriſt on theſe very *conſiderations*. This ſentiment breathed by the benevolent Jeſus, "holy father *glorify thyſelf*," unites the ſanctified heart to the Redeemer, with the moſt tender, endearing and complacential affections. O how unſpeakably diverſe are the exerciſes of the renewed heart, from every thing connatural to us! May we inquiſitively ſearch after its ſpecific difference!

An account of a work of divine grace, in a revival of religion, in the town of LENOX, *State of* MASSACHUSETTS, *in the year* 1799, *in a letter to the Editors from the Rev.* SAMUEL SHEPARD, *of that town.*

GENTLEMEN,

AN aged perſon, who, in early life, inliſted under the banner of Jeſus, and who, in viewing the time of her departure at hand, can ſay with confidence, as we truſt, that ſhe "hath kept the faith," was converſing with me, a few days ſince, upon the concerns of eternity; having complained of much coldneſs, ſtupidity and deadneſs of heart, ſhe added, "I derive great comfort, however, from a peruſal of the Connecticut Evangelical Magazine. It gives me a raiſed hope." This was ſpoken with an emphaſis which engaged my particular attention; and evinced the truth of that remark which has been frequently made, that, through the medium of ſuch a publication as the Magazine, Chriſtians might do much to ſtrengthen the hands, and encourage the hearts of each other. Barnabas, when he came to Antioch, "and had ſeen the grace of God, was glad." The narratives of the late revival of religion in many of our congregations, will alſo, to all the real friends of Zion who read them, give joy unſpeakable.

The conſideration, that religious intelligence of this nature muſt rejoice the friends of the Redeemer, and, by the divine bleſſing, tend, in other reſpects, to promote the proſperity of Zion, has induced me to ſend you ſome account of the late very ſtriking manifeſtation of the reign, and power and grace of the Lord Jeſus among the people of my paſtoral charge.

I cannot learn from any of the firſt ſettlers, that there has ever been any remarkable revival of religion in this town until the month of June 1799. It appears, that the greateſt number which was ever added to this church in the courſe of one year, was about ele-

ven. This, if I am rightly informed, was in the year 1783. Such was the effect of the unhappy diviſions which frequently occurred in the church, and the numerous interruptions to public religious inſtruction and the ſtated adminiſtration of divine ordinances, that, for many years, the meſſage to the church in Sardis might with peculiar propriety have been addreſſed to us—"I know thy works, that thou haſt a name, that thou liveſt, and art dead." At the time of my ordination, which was in April 1795, the ſituation of this church called for the earneſt prayers of all who had a heart to pray. The number of its members was not much greater then, than it had been, perhaps, for twenty-five years before; and, almoſt the whole of them were bowing under the infirmities of age. No perſon, who was in early life, was a member of this church. Not a ſingle young perſon had been received into it, in the courſe of ſixteen years. To ſee the youth, all as one, waſting away their beſt moments in ſtupidity—to view them as accountable creatures, and yet, living apparently without a hope—"without a wiſh beyond the grave"—and, to ſee a few grey-headed perſons compoſe almoſt the whole number of communicants at the ſacramental table—muſt, to one juſt entering upon the work of the miniſtry, give feelings, which cannot eaſily be deſcribed. Well might this church, like God's ancient covenant people when they ſat in captivity by the waters of Babylon, hang its "harps upon the willows;" for, it ſeemed, indeed, that, when the few, who were rapidly haſtening down the vale of time, ſhould be borne to the grave, and delivered from the evil to come, the name of Jeſus, in the holy ordinance of the ſupper, would, among us, be ſcarcely had in remembrance.

Such were the melancholy proſpects of this church until the ſpring of the year 1799. While ſhowers of divine grace were falling on other parts of Zion, and God, by his ſpirit, was viſiting one place and another, and quickening multitudes "for his name's ſake," *we* ſeemed to be ſolemnly warned in the words recorded in Rev. ii. 5. "Remember, therefore, from whence thou art fallen, and repent, or elſe I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candleſtick out of his place." But, the Lord hath ſaid, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy," and, glory be to his name. With him, is the reſidue of the ſpirit, and he can pour it out when, and where, and on whom he pleaſeth. He hath made it, therefore, a day of his power, and cauſed, even in the midſt of us, a "ſhaking among the dry bones."

In the month of April 1799, ſeveral members of the church, manifeſted great anxiety about the ſtate of religion among us, and expreſſed a deſire that meetings might be appointed for religious conference and ſpecial prayer for the out-pouring of the holy ſpirit. This requeſt was afterwards made known to the church as a body. They unanimouſly approved of it, and a conference meeting was accordingly appointed. This meeting was attended by as many people, as previous appearances warranted us to expect. A ſermon was preached at this meeting, and the audience were very attentive. At the next conference, we converſed upon a particular paſſage of ſcripture, which led to a conſideration of the being and perfections of God. Several perſons at this

meeting appeared unuſually ſolemn. About this time, two or three young perſons were brought under deep conviction, and found earneſtly inquiring what they ſhould do to be ſaved; and at the third conference meeting, were to be ſeen, perſons from every part of the town. The divine authority of the ſcriptures, was made the ſubject of converſation, and the appearance of the Aſſembly was truly affecting. They ſeemed *now* to conſider the holy bible to be the *very* voice of God to a guilty world—and the religion of Jeſus, a ſolemn reality. Sinners were brought to tremble in view of eternity—and profeſſing Chriſtians were animated and rendered fervent in prayer. From that time, the work became more general—religious conferences were multiplied—the houſe of God was thronged upon the ſabbath—and multitudes ſeemed, to ſpare no pains in obtaining religious inſtruction. Several perſons, in attempting upon a particular ſabbath to ſing the judgment Anthem, appeared to be greatly diſtreſſed. A ſermon, the deſign of which, was to enforce the leading ideas contained in the anthem, was afterwards delivered from Acts i. 11th.—"This ſame Jeſus, which is taken up from you into heaven, ſhall ſo come in like manner as ye have ſeen him go into heaven." A divine bleſſing appeared in ſome meaſure to attend the diſcourſe; and, while thoſe who entertained a hope of a perſonal intereſt in Chriſt, ſeemed to be wrapped up in the contemplation of that glory and majeſty of Zion's King, which will be diſplayed in that all-important day to which reference is had in the anthem, ſome of the oppoſite character, were apparently filled with awful apprehenſions on account of their ill-deſert, and ſeemed to look forward to the day of judgment, as a time, when their hearts muſt die within them. From that ſolemn ſeaſon, there was an increaſing attention to things of a ſerious nature, among old and young, for ſeveral months. While we heard of ſome from time to time, who were brought to a ſenſe of their guilt and danger, others, having ſeen the impending ſtorm of divine vengeance and fled to one falſe refuge after another till all were tried in vain, were hopefully brought to bow at the foot of divine ſovereignty—to ſee the moral beauty and tranſcendent amiableneſs and worth of the divine Saviour—to embrace him on goſpel terms, and, to find by experience that "wiſdom's ways are pleaſantneſs."

On the twentieth of October, twenty-four perſons were received into the church. This was with us, a memorable day. But a ſmall part of the congregation had ever before ſeen a young perſon publicly engage in the Chriſtian warfare. From the ſame youthful circle—from the ſame family, ſome were "taken" while others were "left." While ſome parents were ſo happy as to ſee their children following them in the Chriſtian profeſſion, others, who were conſcious of being ſtill heirs of that kingdom which is doomed to deſtruction, ſaw their offspring fleeing for refuge to the wounds of a bleeding Saviour. Huſbands and wives—parents and children—brothers and ſiſters were ſeparated by that line of diſtinction which is formed by a religious profeſſion. In this, the divine ſovereignty was obvious, "The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice." Having taken upon themſelves the bonds of the Chriſtian covenant, and heard a particular addreſs to the church and them, dictated by the intereſt-

ing occaſion, thoſe who, in this public manner, had united with the viſible church of Chriſt, ſang an hymn which concluded thus,

" Saints by the power of God are kept,
" Till full ſalvation come:
" We walk by faith, as ſtrangers here,
" Till Chriſt ſhall call us home."

The language to the ſpectators, in the ſcene then paſſing before them was, " We are journeying unto the place of which the Lord ſaid, I will give it you: come thou with us and we will do thee good; for the Lord hath ſpoken good concerning Iſrael." A ſolemn ſilence, was obſerved during the whole ſervice. Not an air of levity was diſcovered, for a moment, in a ſingle countenance. The infidel and abandoned man ſtood appalled —and, to the friends of Zion, the ſeaſon afforded a prelibation of heavenly joys. The old and the young, who were preſent, ſeemed ready to adopt the language of Jacob, when he awoke from a dream, at Bethel, " How dreadful, is this place! This is none other, but the houſe of God, and this is the gate of heaven."

It was not, until ſeveral months after this precious ſeaſon, that the religious attention among us appeared to abate An unhappy contention in the town relative to ſchool-diſtricts, had, among other things, a tendency, no doubt, to grieve away that divine gueſt, who had ſo much gladdened the hearts of the few who had long waited for the " conſolation of Iſrael." At the preſent time, there is evidently a growing inattention to ſpiritual concerns. A goodly number, however, yet manifeſt, in their deportment, much of the life and power of religion; and, from a " remembrance of paſt joys," are probably induced to go often to the throne of grace with the important petition, " Wilt thou not revive us again, that thy people may rejoice in thee?"

The whole number of thoſe, who have been received into this church ſince the beginning of the late awakening, is fifty-three. Some of this number, however, entertained a hope that they had become experimentally acquainted with religion before " the time of refreſhing from the preſence of the Lord," referred to in this narrative. Several perſons, who, in the time of the late awakening, hoped, that, in a ſpiritual ſenſe, they had " paſſed from death unto life," have never yet, in a public manner, declared themſelves to be on the Lord's ſide. Of the number who have been recently added to the church, almoſt two thirds are females. Many of the new converts are in early life. Nearly all of them continue to give ſatisfactory evidence that they have been " called out of darkneſs into marvellous light," and that Chriſt is in reality, " formed in them, the hope of glory."

In a time of ingathering like this, however, it is to be expected that ſome chaff will remain with the wheat. " Let not him that girdeth on his harneſs boaſt himſelf, as he that putteth it off." It becomes all thoſe who enter the Chriſtian warfare, to remember, that the promiſe of ſalvation is to him, " that endureth unto the end;" and, that the ſame grace, which at firſt called them, is requiſite to their perſeverance. " The fruit of the ſpirit," ſaith the apoſtle, " is in all goodneſs, and righteouſneſs and truth;" and, " every man who hath" the Chriſtian " hope in him, purifieth himſelf, even as he" who is the author of it, " is pure."

The conduct of thoſe, who attended religious conferences and

lectures, and, for a time, appeared to be ſeriouſly impreſſed, but afterwards, returned to their former ſtupidity, forcibly reminds me of the caſe of one mentioned in Matthew xii. 45. "The laſt ſtate of that man" ſaid the Saviour, "is worſe than the firſt."

The condition of thoſe who remained uniformly careleſs and inattentive while the goings of God were ſo viſible among us, appears to be ſtill more dangerous and deplorable.

It is expreſsly foretold in the ſacred volume, that, "in the laſt days, ſcoffers ſhall come, walking after their own luſt." To thoſe of ſuch a character—thoſe who openly and bitterly oppoſed this bleſſed work, and ridiculed every thing of a ſerious nature, it is to be feared that nothing remains, "but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which ſhall devour the adverſary."

I will cloſe this general account of the late revival of religion among us, with a few particular remarks.

1. This revival was evidently the work of God. To prove this, the very ſudden change in the appearance and purſuits of the people, is in ſtead of a thouſand arguments. The immediate hand of omnipotence was ſtrikingly exhibited in this work. It was preceded by no providential occurrences which were uncommon. No *ſpecial judgments* were felt, and, a little time only before the revival, people of every deſcription appeared, as to religious concerns, to be ſlumbering and ſleeping. Religious inſtruction was no other now, than it had been; and, ſo far from being affected by mere ſympathy, it was often the caſe that perſons who lived in the ſame neighbourhood, and in the ſame families, were greatly diſtreſſed in mind, without knowing the feelings of each other. Some ſuch, who had ever before been extremely inattentive to divine things and moſt ſhamefully ignorant of the truths of revelation, were now able in a little time to ſpeak of the depravity of the human heart—the nature of ſin—the beauties of holineſs—the plan of ſalvation by Chriſt—in ſhort, of all the doctrines, duties and inſtitutions of the Chriſtian ſyſtem with a propriety, which was truly aſtoniſhing. The Apoſtle knew what he ſaid, when having the goſpel diſpenſation in view, he ſpake theſe memorable words—"We have this treaſure in earthen veſſels that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. "A Paul, divinely inſpired will plant, and an Apollos, with the moſt commanding eloquence will water, in vain—unleſs God give the increaſe. When *he* ſtandeth in the valley of dry bones, and commandeth them to hear his word, they will live. *He* alone can quicken the dead in heart and bow the ſtubborn will, and when it is done, in any inſtance, may he alone have the glory!

2. This revival of religion began in the church; and I believe it will be found true, that, in almoſt *every* inſtance of religious revival, it makes its firſt appearance in the church of Chriſt. When God is about to beſtow ſpiritual bleſſings upon a people, it is his uſual method, firſt to awake his profeſſed friends out of ſleep. Before a ſingle inſtance of conviction was known in this place, in the ſpring of the year 1799, many of the members of this church, in the courſe of a few days, manifeſted an anxious concern for the cauſe of

Chriſt. A ſpirit of fervent prayer and ſupplication ſeemed to be given them; and, "as ſoon as Zion travailed, ſhe brought forth children." While therefore profeſſing chriſtians continue to grieve the Holy Spirit, when they exhibit evidence of much leanneſs of ſoul, and of much coldneſs and ſtupidity in the diſcharge of incumbent duty, they can have but little reaſon to ſuppoſe that a ſhower of divine grace is near them.

3. Such a revival of religion moſt ſtrikingly evinces the importance of all the means of grace which God hath inſtituted. When once the attention of a people is really called up to the concerns of the ſoul, how precious, in *their* view are ſeaſons for prayer. How precious is God's holy ſabbath—how inſtantly do they fly to the bible—how highly do they prize every opportunity to get religious inſtruction, and to aſſociate with the people of God for ſerious converſation! How great would be the diſtreſs of ſuch, if they were, at once, deprived of all opportunity to learn the character of God—to acquire right views of their own moral ſtate—and, of the goſpel plan of ſalvation? God works by means, in the *moral*, as well as natural world. They are neceſſarily connected with the end. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

4. The appearance of the people in this place, at the time of the late awakening, will enable me to add to the teſtimony of others reſpecting the work in general, that it has been attended with moſt remarkable regularity. God was emphatically in the "ſtill ſmall voice." Nothing was ſaid, in particular, about dreams and viſions—hearing unuſual voices and ſeeing uncommon ſights. No extravagance, either in geſtures, or out-cries, appeared. No wild enthuſiaſm attended the revival in any ſtage of it.

5. Among thoſe in this town who have been awakened to attend to religious truth, a remarkable uniformity has occurred relative to the doctrines which have been embraced. Theſe are ſuch as are uſually termed *calviniſtic*. Such truths, as the total and awful depravity of the human heart—the neceſſity of regeneration; or, a change of moral taſte as a preparation for the enjoyment of a holy heaven—the equity of the divine law in its *penalty*, as well as *precept*—the divine ſovereignty in the ſalvation of ſinners, as the only poſſible ground of hope in the caſe of a guilty offender—the neceſſity of goſpel morality as an evidence of juſtifying faith—and all the doctrines eſſentially connected with theſe, were readily received by all "with one conſent."

6. It is worthy of notice, that the revival of religion in this town has proved to be almoſt a *death-wound* to the vain amuſements of young people. An attempt to eſtabliſh a dancing-ſchool among us in the time of the late ſpecial attention to religion was rendered nearly abortive: and, the youth in general are ſtill very remarkable for ſobriety. Many of them are ready to acknowledge inſtantly, that they have derived more ſubſtantial enjoyment in *one hour* of religious worſhip and converſation, than an *eternity* would afford them in the purſuit of ſelfiſh gratifications.

7. One diſtinguiſhed feature of this work as it appeared among us, and elſewhere, according to the narratives which have been publiſhed, is humility. The ſubjects of this revival, who have obtained a Chriſtian hope, have very uniformly

appeared to be humble, and to walk ſoftly before their Maker. In view of the divine perfections and requirements, they have, at times, expreſſed great ſelf-abhorrence. This has been one ſtriking effect of the genuine operation of the divine ſpirit, on the hearts of ſinners, in every age. We find that "God and his grace are ſtill the ſame;" and, that *true religion* is the ſame thing, in all the real ſubjects of it. Did a true knowledge of God, lead Job to "abhor himſelf and repent in duſt and aſhes"—and Iſaiah to exclaim, "I am undone, becauſe I am a man of unclean lips"—and Jeremiah to ſmite upon his thigh and confeſs his ſhame—and the Publican to ſmite upon his breaſt, ſaying, "God be merciful to me a ſinner"—and Peter to fall down, ſaying, "depart from me, for I am a ſinful man, O, Lord"—and Paul to exclaim, "O, wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me, from the body of this death?" A ſimilar ſenſe of their own vileneſs and perſonal guilt has alſo been manifeſted by multitudes, who, in the courſe of the late revival of religion in New-England, have been hopefully brought out of their natural darkneſs and ignorance "into marvellous light" and knowledge.

May an holy God, in infinite mercy, continue to make manifeſt the glory of his power and the glory of his grace, in building up Zion; for, in no other way, can we rationally expect to ſee happy individuals—happy families—happy neighborhoods—happy ſocieties—happy towns—happy ſtates—happy kingdoms—and a happy world!

Wiſhing a divine bleſſing to attend your laudable exertions to promote Chriſtian knowledge, and, to communicate religious intelligence to the friends of Jeſus in different parts of our land and world.

I am, Gentlemen,
very reſpectfully,
yours, &c.
SAMUEL SHEPARD.

Lenox, (Ms.) May 7, 1801.

MESS'RS. EDITORS,

SHOULD you judge the following obſervations from 1 Cor. vii. 16. and the ſubſequent narrative which is a real fact, and the remarks ſubjoined, to be worthy of a place in your Magazine, you are deſired to give them an inſertion, and oblige a friend to your moſt uſeful publication.

"*For what knoweſt thou O wife whether thou ſhalt ſave thy huſband.*"

IT is very plain from the connection in which theſe words ſtand that the Apoſtle was urging the propriety of believing huſbands and wives continuing to live with their unbelieving companions, unleſs they firſt broke away from them, and rendered their union in the married relation no longer proper or poſſible. As an argument to evince the duty of their continuing with their unbelieving partners, the Apoſtle introduced the words before us, "For what knoweſt thou O wife whether thou ſhalt ſave thy huſband"—and in the concluſion of the verſe—"Or how knoweſt thou O man whether thou ſhalt ſave thy wife?" His obvious meaning was, addreſſing himſelf directly to a believing wife; How do you know, whether by your kind and Chriſtian deportment—your meekneſs, humility and endearing converſation—and above all by your ardent prayers for his ſoul, you may not be made an inſtrument in God's hand, of ſoftening

his heart, and bringing him to genuine repentance and final salvation? You are placed in this situation by divine providence. While you both were sinners God had mercy on you; and now, how knowest thou, but he has brought you into this relation for the very purpose of making your Christian exertions operate for his spiritual good? They surely must be to him most powerful means of conviction; and if so, you have great reason to hope they may be rendered efficacious. And hence let no consideration induce you to leave him, if he is disposed to abide, and fulfil the duties of an husband. The same, precisely, may be addressed to the believing husband, concerning his unbelieving wife.

These ideas being plainly held up in the text, afford very great encouragement to persons placed in like circumstances. From causes too numerous to mention it is a fact, that multitudes in a Christian country are unequally connected, in the married state, with companions destitute of true piety; and while this is the case, and *felt to be so*, it is a source of the *heaviest affliction*, although the partner, in every other respect, is agreeable and truly respected. Not to speak of the almost unsurmountable weight of sorrow which is added, when the unbeliever is highly disobliged by religion, and unpleasant in his carriage otherwise, let the observation apply to the most eligible condition the circumstances can admit. While the believer from day to day, feels the attractions of heavenly things and the sweets of communion with God: He, or she, has no partner in these joys. The bosom friend is unaffected, uninterested, and wholly occupied in meaner things, and even trifles comparatively. His mind, his tho'ts, his feelings are all carnal, worldly, and constantly pursuing some unsubstantial earthly toys. He has no relish for serious subjects—of the delights of religion he knows nothing—he has no spiritual taste, by which the invisible realties of heaven delight him—no, the odors of Paradise diffused through divine truths do not regale him—when his dear friend opens the heart-felt pleasures of devotion—the joys of holy contemplation upon the Saviour of sinners, and his wondrous methods of grace, he sits mute, or replies so wide from the current of her views and wishes, as demonstrates his unapprehension of what she has said. This same incapacity to join in holy joys or sorrows, or in whatever the heart is most interested, *occurs unceasingly*. This brings on a burden upon her soul which utterly surpasses description. *And what can be done*; shall they part? This is forbidden. But how can the heart endure its solitude, in so dear a connection, and be foiled in every pious social joy? How can it endure its temptations to sin from worldly pursuits, in order to please an unsanctified taste, in her partner—or how can it maintain the cheerfulness suitable to the Christian life, or discharge its duties? The answer to all these queries is, *Abide in the spirit; hope and trust in God.—Be kind and gentle to your friend; condescend and oblige him to the utmost of your power in all lawful things, and pray for his soul.*

The kind *Julia*, who lived in this situation, in one of the larger towns in this state, felt all the energies of pure religion for her dear, yet unbelieving husband. But what could she do? He was bred to seafaring business, and a complete man of the world. Like too many who visit foreign parts,

and ſee how the faſhionable world live, he ſet light by the pearl of great price. He never prayed in his family, or ſeriouſly thanked the giver of his daily bread. He aſſociated himſelf with ſuch as ſuited his own caſt of mind, and ſpent his whole time in the mere acquiſition of worldly treaſures. Sometimes, though not ſteadily he waited on her to the houſe of God on the ſabbath and attended public worſhip with decency.—But afterward was beſt pleaſed in ſpending the remainder of the day, in converſing upon buſineſs—hearing and rehearſing the public news or amuſing himſelf ſome way with his aſſociates, with whom he might happen to fall in company. He was kind to his Julia, and never allowed himſelf to ſpeak diſreſpectfully of religion in her preſence; but ſeemed to yield it reverence purely for her ſake. He would often wait on her to the door, where a private conference meeting was held; and then retire to ſome worldly company till it was over; and then return and conduct her home. Thus ſhe had no proſpect, but to ſpend her days with one, whoſe kindeſt attentions, were but the ſhell of endearment; for their hearts *had no communion*, under all the outward civilities which they paid to each other. A concealed pain in Julia's heart attended every attempt to pleaſe or be pleaſed. Often a ſtrange coolneſs, and indifference would ſteal imperceptibly upon them, which the moment perceived would give alarm, and all appearances again were ſaved by *revived fomalities* of friendſhip and mutual tenderneſs. But in proceſs of time Negotio became impaired in his health, and after repeated indiſpoſitions was obliged to omit buſineſs, and reſign himſelf to confinement.—Soon likewiſe his temporal affairs became deranged and embarraſſed. Theſe things altered not the natural vigor of his ſpirits—they only introduced a temporary gloom, which partook of that ſorrow of the world which works death; and then hope of amendment would revive him. Nearly two years elapſed in this ſituation, when his complaints increaſed upon him very materially. Through this ſcene, the kind Julia, was doubly attentive to all his neceſſities, by night and by day—no endearing office in her power eſcaped her; and often while adminiſtering ſome refreſhing cordials, ſhe would introduce the balm of the goſpel, and diſcourſe to him upon religion. His ear ſeemed in ſome meaſure to be opened to inſtruction; but this was all. She exhorted him to pray; but no, this was a buſineſs to which he never had attended. He expreſſed a willingneſs to have others pray for him, but he could not pray for himſelf. About this time how often did the heart of Julia melt within her, to notice from day to day, his diſorders gradually advancing, and his poor ſoul buried in *darkneſs*, *ſtupidity*, and *ſin*. She made it her conſtant practice every night, after tenderly repoſing him in bed, to retire to another apartment and pour out her heart before God for his eternal intereſt. At length this appeared too little. The thought ſtruck her with ſolemn energy, "How can I leave my poor, ſick, unſanctified huſband alone, and perhaps to die without prayer—totally inſenſible of the importance or privilege of it! How can I attend ſo particularly to his bodily wants and neglect the greateſt expreſſion of love which is due to his immortal part! How can I neglect to *pray with him*, as well as for him!"

The full conviction of duty ſo ruſhed upon her mind as to be irreſiſtiable.—She reſolved to return to him and diſmiſs fear, and introduce the impreſſions ſhe had felt.—Inſtantly ſhe aroſe, and went and told him her heart.—He conſented —and ſhe kneeled down by his bed-ſide, and breathed out her ſoul to God *for him*, and herſelf, with tears of penitence, humility and affection, through the glorious Redeemer. This ſcene took hold of him moſt powerfully. His whole ſoul now began to tremble for his future exiſtence, and his appearance before his judge. His ſins were ſet in order before him. The ſolemn ſcene of hearing his Julia pray was repeated—and continued at proper ſeaſons. But who can expreſs ſufficiently the glory and gratitude due to ſovereign grace, or the joy among ſaints and angels, to hear that in a ſhort time, theſe ardent prayers were moſt graciouſly anſwered—*Negotio is revived from ſpiritual death—ſanctified by the Holy Spirit, and rejoices in a well grounded hope of a glorious eternity.*

The pious Julia wrote me ſince this took place, and by her indulgence, I am permitted to uſe her own words, as follows—" Who can expreſs the ſatisfaction that I felt on account of his earneſtly ſeeking for that happineſs which cannot be found in earthly comforts. I continually breathed forth my deſires to heaven for him, that he might be brought out of darkneſs, into God's marvellous light. And I have a hope, that my prayers and tears have not been unnoticed by a merciful God, who has ſtiled himſelf *a God hearing prayer. My dear friend I humbly hope is a child of God*—his *deſires and feelings* appear to be thoſe of a penitent — He is patient under afflictions, and reſigned to the will of heaven.—Though he is deprived of the privilege of converſing with his friends, we can judge of the feelings of his heart by his ſighs and tears.—In the midſt of trials, we can ſing of mercy, as well as judgment."

Since this apparent change I have frequently called at his houſe, and although exceedingly debilitated, the ſprings of remaining life ſeem to be abſorbed in religious meditation and joy in God.—He never ſuffers an opportunity to paſs without deſiring to join in prayer—and he is often ſo carried out in the joys of this exerciſe as to be unable to command his feelings within the common bounds of moderation.—This frame of mind has now been ſo habitual to him for a length of time as convinces all who have opportunity to be in his company of its divine reality.

The encouragement held out in this example to all who are placed in ſimilar connections is exceedingly great. It ſhews from real fact how ſtrong reaſon there is, to hope that God will bleſs the endeavors of thoſe, who actually fulfil their duty in the marriage relation, for the ſalvation of their unbelieving companions. The writer cannot forbear to urge upon all believing huſbands and wives, the ſolemn and endearing duties which they owe to their unrenewed friends in the following particulars.

1. Your Chriſtian profeſſion and marriage vows require of you that you love them as yourſelves. This implies that you ſtudy and endeavor to promote their greateſt happineſs in this life, and the future—that in the kindeſt manner poſſible you try to pleaſe them in all lawful things, and render their lives comfortable—and that you join with them in ſocial prayer for their ſouls.

All this, is only loving them as you love yourſelves, and carrying into effect your marriage vows. As benevolence is ſuppoſed to reign in your hearts, ſo kindneſs ought to dwell upon your tongues. Endearing condeſcenſion and tenderneſs ſhould always attend every little office of perſonal regard. A ſweet, cheerful diſpoſition to bear the burdens and ſhare in all the afflictions and diſappointments of your neareſt friends ſhould mark your conduct—and let no opportunity to oblige them paſs unimproved. Add to this, a ſtrict integrity in your attention to all their weighty concerns of intereſt or reputation. By practiſing in this manner the force of your religion will be manifeſted, and its amiable tendency. You will be enabled in the happieſt manner to introduce to your boſom friends, the infinite importance of their ſalvation and the propriety of ſocial interceſſion for it. And under ſo many advantages, it is preſumed, ſcarcely an inſtance will ever be found of an unbeliever, of either ſex, who will heſitate to join in ſo plain and important a duty.

2. Your ardent and unceaſing deſire for the ſalvation of your friends and hope of ſucceſs in ſtriving for it muſt prompt you to perſeverance in the above duties — *Many have ſucceeded* and ſo may you—"How knoweſt thou O wife whether thou ſhalt ſave thy huſband?" The power of religion acted out in the deportment of an amiable woman has an aſtoniſhing effect upon the world in general, but how much more upon a friend, ſo near as an huſband? The purity of her deſigns for his real good univerſally diſplayed before him—and the charms of innocence, meekneſs and humility acted out in ſubſtantial ſervices, will captivate and confine him in the externals of duty. The majeſty of her innocence and piety will make him tremble at vice, and conſtrain him to unite with her in the forms of devotion to God. Under this influence how ſtrong is the ground to hope that God will, in his own time, *add the power of his ſpirit* and give him a *new heart?* This hope will ever prompt her to perſevere, and draw him with the cords of love. She will keep her eye fixed upon her duty, and cheerfully walk with the expectation of ſeeing the power of divine grace manifeſted, in the ſalvation of his ſoul: And finally ſhould ſhe ſucceed, her joy would exceed deſcription. But,

3. Should you never ſucceed in winning to Chriſt your unbelieving companions, the practice of the above duties will exceedingly meliorate your preſent condition and give you peace in a dying hour. The man, or woman, who finds himſelf or herſelf connected with an unſanctified friend, will find it hard to maintain the fervor of religion alone. Yet, God is able to give this grace, and aſſiſt his children to perform their duty in this relation as well as any other; and doubtleſs will do it, if they purſue right methods to obtain it.—And when they are eſtabliſhed in this courſe, they will make the moſt of life. Duty done to the utmoſt leaves the conſcience at peace. The wife who ſpends her days in endeavors to ſweeten the life of her huſband, and draw his heart to God, will be rewarded in part as ſhe paſſes along. Her engaging manners can never fail to procure eſteem and kindneſs. She will have it in her power to arreſt his whole attention to her reaſonable wiſhes; and hereby increaſe every domeſtic comfort. But eſpecially when ſhe comes to die,

how rich will be the conſolation to reflect, that through grace ſhe has fulfilled her duty, and nothing kind has been wanting towards her boſom friend. With more tenderneſs than ever; yea, with exquiſite feeling ſhe bids him, perhaps *an eternal adieu*, and commits his ſoul into the hands of him who gave it—and dies in peace. The believing huſband likewiſe who has fulfilled his duty, will finiſh life in a ſimilar manner.

NUNCIO.

Sketches of the character, life and death of the Rev. SAMUEL BUELL, D. D. *late Paſtor of the Church, at Eaſt-Hampton, on* LONG-ISLAND.

DOCTOR SAMUEL BUELL was born of reputable parents, at Coventry in the State of Connecticut, Sept. 1, 1716. Nothing occurs to us in the courſe of his life, worthy of particular notice, in this place, till the 17th year of his age. About this time he fell under ſpecial ſerious impreſſions. His conviction of ſin, guilt and miſery, was clear, diſtinct and pungent. He was the ſubject of much legal terror, and experienced a deep work of humiliation. Theſe exerciſes continued for a number of months, during which time, he was led to the moſt affecting diſcoveries of the evil of ſin, the plague and total depravity of his heart, the utter inſufficiency of his own righteouſneſs, his periſhing need of Chriſt, and abſolute dependance upon the free and ſovereign grace of God, for an intereſt in his merits. In this ſtate of mind, it pleaſed the God of all grace to reveal his ſon in him. His ſpiritual diſcoveries of the glory of the divine character, perfections and law, of Chriſt and the way of ſalvation through him; and his conſequent joy and peace in believing, were proportionate to the pungency and terror of his antecedent convictions.

This change in his views wholly altered the previouſly concerted plans of his life. His father being a wealthy farmer, and for a long time having no other ſon, he was deſigned for a life of huſbandry; and himſelf expected to ſpend his days in agricultural purſuits. His proſpects in this line of life were flattering. But the ardent deſires, which he now felt, to promote the ſalvation of ſouls, diſpoſed him cheerfully to relinquiſh theſe proſpects, that he might ſerve God in the goſpel of his ſon. More than two years being ſpent in prayer for direction in duty, obſerving the ſubſequent frame and temper of his own heart, adviſing with friends, and it was concluded that he ſhould enter upon a courſe of public education, in reference to this end. He began his ſtudies preparatory to his admiſſion to Yale-College, in the 21ſt year of his age; and within a year from that time was admitted a member.

During the courſe of his academical education, he enjoyed much of the divine preſence. From written memorials of that period, it appears that, though he was not without interpoſing ſeaſons of darkneſs, he was greatly favored with the lively and ſenſible exerciſes of grace; and the elevated comforts of the divine life. He often ſpeaks of inſtances of communion with God uninterrupted for weeks and months together. Here he became firſt acquainted with Mr. David Brainerd, with whom he afterwards maintained the moſt endearing intimacy, till death deprived the church and world of that diſtinguiſhed ſervant and eminent min-

iſter of Chriſt. Nothing can be more affectionate than the terms in which Mr. Brainerd is often mentioned, in the Doctor's private writings; and he has frequently been heard to ſay, that there was no other man to whom he ever could ſo freely open his heart, and with whom he enjoyed ſuch ſweet and elevated Chriſtian fellowſhip.

The proficiency which he made in his collegiate ſtudies evidenced the ſtrength of his mind, and the intenſeneſs of his application. He received the honors of College, and took his firſt degree Sept. 1741.

Upon this, his intention was to have ſpent a number of years with Mr. Edwards of Northampton, afterwards Preſident of the College at Princeton, in theological ſtudies, preparatory to the miniſtry. But from the peculiar ſtate of things, and the ſpecial call for zealous preachers, ariſing from the glorious revival of religion, then taking place, extenſively, in the land, he was encouraged and adviſed to apply *immediately* for licence to preach the goſpel; and, after paſſing the uſual trials, was licenſed the following October.

As a preacher he was well received, and his labors were attended with much power and remarkable ſucceſs Soon after his licenſe, he made a journey to Northampton. On his way he preached almoſt every day, in the different congregations thro' which he paſſed; and the divine bleſſing ſeemed in a ſignal manner to attend every ſermon. he influence of his labors, at Northampton, may be ſeen in the following extract of a letter from Mr. Edwards to the Rev. Mr. Prince of Boſton, dated Northampton Dec. 1742. "About the beginning of Feb. 1741-2 Mr. Buell came to this town, I being then abſent from home, and continued ſo till about a fortnight after. Mr. Buell preached, from day to day, almoſt every day, in the meeting-houſe, (I having left to him the free liberty of my pulpit, hearing of his deſigned viſit before I went from home) and ſpent almoſt the whole time in religious exerciſes with the people, either in public or private, the people continually thronging him. There were very extraordinary effects of Mr. Buell's labors; the people were exceedingly moved, crying out, in great numbers in the meeting-houſe, and great part of the congregation commonly ſtaying in the houſe of God for hours after the public ſervice. Many, alſo, were exceedingly moved in private meetings where Mr. Buell was; and almoſt the whole town ſeemed to be in a great and continual commotion, day and night; and there was indeed a very great revival of religion. When I came home I found the town in very extraordinary circumſtances, ſuch in ſome reſpects as I never ſaw it in before. Mr. Buell continued here, a fortnight or three weeks, after I returned; there being ſtill great appearances attending his labors."—Sometime after this, the Doctor having noted his preaching in a certain place, where there were no viſible effects of the word, adds, "The firſt time I ever preached to an aſſembly, where tears of affection, under the word, were not to be ſeen; and almoſt the firſt when the Lord was not manifeſtly preſent with the people."

The remaining part of this year, he journeyed to Boſton, and other parts of New-England, abounding in labors, as before; which, in almoſt every place, were attended with ſimilar effects.

In Nov. 1743, he was ordained, as an itinerant preacher; in which

capacity, he was indefatigable in labors, and alſo ſignally owned of God as the inſtrument of the awakening and hopeful converſion of multitudes and of building up ſaints in their moſt holy faith. It may not be improper to obſerve here, that as he went out under the patronage of miniſters of note, and was careful to act according to their prudent advice, and always carried with him clear and ample teſtimonials, he was received in many places and admitted to many pulpits, from which others, leſs delicate, in theſe reſpects, were excluded.—Doctor Buell always diſapproved of the raſhneſs, and imprudence of ſome of the friends of the work of God, as well as the unreaſonable oppoſition of others, who thought leſs favorably of it.

During this period his health was much impaired; and he was attacked with dangerous ſymptoms of a conſumption. He was particularly exerciſed, about this time, with a ſevere fit of ſickneſs, of ſeven months continuance; which in a great meaſure cut off the hopes of himſelf and his friends, as to the continuance of his life. It pleaſed God by thus ſhaking him, over the grave, to put his perſonal religion to the teſt, and happily it ſtood the trial. He has been heard to ſpeak, with much gratitude and affection, of the triumphant faith he was enabled to exerciſe, under this affliction—the joy and peace which he had in believing, and the cheerfulneſs with which, had it been the will of God, he could have departed to be with Chriſt. But it pleaſed God, who had further ſervice for him in the church to raiſe him up, and give him much better health than before. After this the labors of his miniſterial courſe were rarely interrupted by bodily indiſpoſition.

It was a direction of providence, in ſome reſpects, extraordinary, which brought him firſt to Eaſt-Hampton. That congregation was now in a broken ſtate, having been diſappointed in their attempts to ſettle ſeveral Candidates. In reſpect to the laſt a council was called to ordain him. Of this Council the Rev. Mr. Burr and other miniſters from New-Jerſey were members. Upon the meeting of the Council the people were found ſo much divided, that they did not think it prudent to proceed. And when thoſe, who were deſirous of the ordination, urged among other arguments, for it the great pains they had taken and expenſe they had been at to obtain a miniſter, Mr. Burr and the other miniſters from New-Jerſey replied, "that they ſhould be at no further trouble, that they would take it upon them to ſend them a preacher who would be agreeable." Soon after this Mr. Buell arrived, in New-Jerſey, on his way to the ſouthern ſtates, recommended from New-England—and, by the importunity of theſe miniſters, he was prevailed upon to turn his courſe and viſit Eaſt-Hampton. His labors proved acceptable. He received a preſſing invitation from the people to ſettle with them in the miniſtry; and, after ſuitable time for deliberation and prayer, accepted the call, and was inſtalled, as their Paſtor, Sept. 19, 1746.

In this retirement he devoted himſelf, with great ardor, to his ſtudies. Though Doctor Buell always entertained a high opinion of the ſpecial aid of the ſpirit of God, in preaching and other parts of miniſterial duty, yet he by no means thought lightly of that furniture for the miniſtry, which

is acquired by ſtudy. On the contrary he conſidered it as of great importance; and was not ſatisfied with ordinary meaſures of it himſelf. His preſent ſituation, notwithſtanding the avocations of parochial duty, compared with the unſettled ſtate he had been in before, afforded many advantages for intellectual improvement. Theſe advantages were improved with much aſſiduity and he early obtained the character of a reputable divine, as well as powerful preacher. As an inſtance of the uniformity of his application, at the cloſe of a number of the firſt years of his miniſtry it is noted, "This year have written all my ſermons, and preached them without notes." A favorite work, which lay upon his hands for a number of years, was a treatiſe upon the prophecies which he intended for the public. But Biſhop Newton's Diſſertations upon that ſubject coming out about that time induced him to relinquiſh the deſign, as being in a great meaſure ſuperceded by that celebrated performance.

Still however, Doctor Buell conſidered his ſtudies, and the acquirement of knowledge as a mean, not as an end. It was his deſire to know, not merely for the ſake of knowing, or being reputed a learned man, but for the ſake of being uſeful. His favorite maxim was, "Uſefulneſs in life." Hence his ſtudies, however much he loved them, did not prevent his punctual attention to the claims of active ſervice. Never could he content himſelf, to be ſhut up in his ſtudy, whilſt immortal ſouls within his reach, whether in his own congregation or round about, were hungering for the bread of life. He never made any attempts to diſcover with how little ſervice his people would be contented. On the contrary he encouraged them to expect much, and rejoiced when they were diſpoſed to receive it.

He always entertained a deep ſenſe of the ſolemn nature and connections of the miniſterial office; and the ſacred obligations of all who ſuſtain it. His miniſtrations were uſually performed under a weighty ſenſe of inviſible and eternal things. As an inſtance of this, he notes, at a certain time, "This day preached before the Supreme Court, *in the preſence of the great God.*" In the various branches of paſtoral duty he was diligent and faithful. "He watched for ſouls, as one who expected to give account." In preaching the word he was abundant. It was common with him, in addition to his ſtated labors on the Lord's-day, to preach once or twice, and in times of ſpecial attention much oftener, in the courſe of the week. The doctrines, which he taught, were ſtrictly calviniſtic. What are commonly called the doctrines of grace made the ſubſtance of his preaching.* His manner was plain and ſolemn, warm and pungent. He left not the underſtandings of his hearers uninformed; but his principal talent lay in urging home divine truth on the heart and conſcience. He taught not only publicly, but from houſe to houſe. The riſing generation were not neglected by him. In the earlier parts of his miniſtry he was laborious, in chatechiſing the children and youth of his charge; and

* The Doctor's religious ſentiments, as to all the diſtinguiſhing doctrines of the goſpel, were the ſame with thoſe of Preſident Edwards and Doctor Bellamy; whoſe writings he read with much pleaſure and approbation, often obſerving of the former of theſe two great divines, that "*he was, under heaven, his oracle.*"

more recently, for years together, he lectured to them in the Academy, every week. He was ſkilful in counſelling ſuch as applied to him under ſpiritual trouble; and in adminiſtering conſolation to the diſtreſſed, of every deſcription; and to ſuch offices he was always ready.

(To be continued.)

Admonitions from the Death-Bed.

(Continued from p. 110.)

NUMBER III.

MESS'RS EDITORS.

IT has often been obſerved that the greateſt degree of error and ſtupidity, concerning moral obligation and duty, and a ſtate of retribution in the world to come, is found in certain perſons who have been the ſubjects of ſerious impreſſions, and by long reſiſting their own conſciences and the ſtrivings of God's ſpirit, have provoked him to leave them to their own blindneſs and luſts. As a warning to others I have tranſmitted to you the following inſtance.

A man, who poſſeſſed reaſon and ſagacity above the common proportion, and about the age of thirty, fell into ſuch a ſtate of debility as rendered him incapable of much attention to buſineſs. Before this he had diſcovered an inordinate attachment to property, and omitted neither diligence, nor art, nor parſimony to obtain it. His ſtate was called hypochondriac by his neighbors, for a certain recluſeneſs of temper prevented his communicating to them the diſtracting feelings of his mind. When he was in this ſtate, I accidentally paſſed a day in his company. After a ſhort converſation I diſcovered marks of a wounded conſcience, and told him my ſuſpicion, that his whole diſorder proceeded from anxiety on ſpiritual accounts. Finding I had detected his feelings, he made a frank acknowledgement it was the caſe, but ſolicited that it might remain a ſecret with me. He told me of ſundry times in his paſt life when, for ſhort ſeaſons, his conſcience had continually accuſed him. He had ſeen himſelf to be a ſinner, if there was any truth in the ſcriptures, and he dreaded an appearance before God as the moſt awful of all events; ſtill he could not bear to think of another kind of life, and of parting with thoſe worldly deſigns which had governed his paſt conduct. He ſaid he had been many months in this ſituation, and ſomething continually ſounded in his ears, that he was a ſinner, that he muſt die and come into judgment, and without another ſtate of heart muſt be miſerable; but, added he, "I cannot part with my worldly 'ſchemes. I muſt again be a man 'of buſineſs; I have juſt laid a 'foundation for ſucceſs, and if I 'give way to theſe apprehenſions 'there is an end of my proſpects. 'This I own to be the cauſe of all 'my gloom, and if I could put 'another world and my own prep'aration for it out of ſight, I 'ſhould again be a happy man."

I immediately perceived, that altho preſſed with ſome conviction of the truth, he was contending with one who will prevail. I ſet before him the danger of reſiſting ſuch impreſſions; the folly of preferring an avaricious life of gain to the immortal intereſts of his ſoul; and the ſuperior wiſdom of ſubordinating all our worldly labors, views and hopes to our eternal well being. I endeavored to ſhew him his true ſtate, his need of another heart, the danger of his being left to a moſt ruinous blindneſs and to

eternal miſery. After much ſolemn converſation we parted.

Nearly a year from this time we had another opportunity for free diſcourſe. It was ſought by himſelf with an evident deſign to confront and reproach me for the exhortation I had given him with the moſt friendly intention. I inſtantly ſaw that his ſerioufneſs was departed, and his conſcience ſeared. By his own account, he continued ſeveral months longer in that ſtate of apprehenſion and reſiſtance to the truth which has been deſcribed, when he came to the raſh opinion, that the whole of his paſt feelings were but a hypochondriac gloom, and ſupported himſelf by the following argument. "You know 'that hypochondriaciſm is a falſe 'imagination of the mind; and 'within one week after I detected 'my folly in being ſo anxious for 'another world, I became well and 'happy, and have ſo continued." He further added, "I now think 'that all the notions I have had 'concerning the holineſs of God 'and the rewards of another world 'are falſe. As to ſin, it is evident 'there can be no ſuch thing, nor 'do I any more believe that I ſhall 'exiſt after this body dies, than 'that thoſe trees before us will exiſt hereafter, and be happy or 'miſerable." "But," replied I, "is it not a gloomy thought, that 'your exiſtence will ceaſe when 'your body dies?" "As for that," he anſwered, "I cannot help it, 'and we muſt make the moſt of 'what we have." I perceived him determined not to think leſt it ſhould make him unhappy, and on my ſolicitouſly urging him to review the momentous ſubject, he became peeviſh and ſaid I was trying to give myſelf importance in the world by all I ſaid concerning religion.

His life, for ſeveral years after this, was ſuch as might be expected from his principles. Riches were his idol. His parſimony preſerved him from licentious exceſs. Honeſt men deteſted the principles by which they ſaw him to be governed. His unprincipled aſſociates were afraid to fall under his power. There was ſomething in his countenance indeſcribable that marked him for another Cain, and while many through neceſſity reſorted to him for aſſiſtance, there was not a man on earth who loved him. Paſſing over ſeveral parts of his conduct, which evidently proceeded from an endeavor to eraſe from his mind a ſenſe of moral obligation, of ſin, and a ſtate where impenitent ſinners ſhall receive a reward according to their deeds, I ſhall now come to his death-bed. A juſt Providence forbad him a long ſtate of decay as a ſeaſon of admonition and preparation for eternity. He had his call before and it was rejected. An awful accident in a moment placed him in a hopeleſs ſtate, and within two days of his exit from this world. This accident tho fatal, did not immediately affect his head, and the powers of reaſon were in full ſtrength.

Now behold the man who had exploded moral obligation, denied the exiſtence of ſin, determined there was no future life, and conſequently no puniſhment for him, and all this for the ſake of gaining and enjoying this world without the moleſtations of his own conſcience. True it is, that in this awful moment he was left to a great degree of judicial blindneſs concerning another world, the nature of hopeful preparation for death, and the juſt and eternal reward of ſin; but miſery and diſmay roſe upon him from a quarter he did not expect. His beloved

ſcheme of ceaſing to exiſt at death became his terror. "And have I 'now," ſaid he, "done with ex-'iſtence? Shall I preſently ceaſe 'to think, to ſee, to feel? Am I 'to exiſt but a few moments filled 'with pain, and then lie down to 'be nothing forever? I am pained 'for the fruits of my labor; I have 'labored for nothing; I cannot 'bid farewell to the earnings of 'ſo many years."

On being told by one who had not known his previous opinions, that he certainly ſhould exiſt, and that the future being of men was indicated by nature, and made ſure by ſcriptural evidence, an aſpect of ſtill greater horror ſettled on his countenance, and after a pauſe of a minute he replied: "If thoſe 'ſcriptures are true, eternity will 'be more dreadful to me than the 'loſs of being. I will not believe 'them; yet how dreadful the idea 'of ſinking into eternal thought-'leſs night!" This ſtruggle of feeling laſted but a few minutes, before this miſerable man either ſunk into the eternal ſleep which he dreaded, or opened his eyes in an eternity to him more dreadful!!!

Such are the dying comforts of impiety. Thus at laſt will the excuſes and pleas of irreligion torment thoſe who adopt them in their lives, to quiet an accuſing conſcience, and reſiſt the warnings of the holy ſpirit who ſtrives with men. This is a fearful example of that blindneſs into which many are left judicially to fall through grieving the ſpirit of grace!

PRESBUTEROS.

A letter from a Father to his Daughter.

DEAR DAUGHTER,

YOU mention in your's of the 11th inſt. a treatiſe of Mr. Dickinſon upon the doctrine of election in my poſſeſſion which you had formerly read and wiſh for it with my opinion, meaning, as I ſuppoſe, on the ſubject, and not reſpecting the performance. I have not the book in my poſſeſſion at preſent, but will ſend you ſome of my thoughts on the ſubject.

That the bible is of divine original or a real and true revelation from Heaven will not be denied, or doubted, by a perſon who ſeriouſly and impartially attends to the evidence in ſupport of the idea or ſuppoſition. As it is, in my apprehenſion, of the higheſt importance to have this point fully eſtabliſhed in order to ſettle our opinion and eſtabliſh a belief of any doctrine of revelation, I will give you a few of my thoughts (and I can do no more in a letter) reſpecting the evidence we have in ſupport of the truth of the bible as a revelation, or rather, revelations from God. It is natural to begin with Moſes—Philoſophy will teach us that there are very few, if any, original or innate ideas in the human mind, and experience will join to prove that, however fruitful the imagination, the human mind does not poſſeſs ideas which have not had ſome antecedent archetypes. But what was there to ſuggeſt to Moſes the hiſtory he has given us of creation. He might, indeed, from the works of God poſſibly have traced out ſome of the divine attributes which belong to the Creator; but if we form an opinion on this point from the known and acknowledged ſtupidity, ignorance and groſs miſconceptions (where there are any at all) reſpecting the exiſtence and perfections of God, which poſſeſs the minds of that part of mankind not favored with divine revelation, we ſhall at once conclude that his

ideas of the author of nature—of that God who he tells us created the heavens and earth were ſolely matter of revelation. Be this as it may, what is there in nature, in all the works of God which we ſee, or which Moſes ſaw, which has or then had the leaſt conceivable aptneſs or fitneſs to excite in his mind one idea of creation? And much leſs to ſuggeſt the manner or proceſs in which the work was carried on. But leaſt of all, the idea of divine reſt. All the ingenuity of the Deiſt will leave the hiſtory of the creation as given by Moſes perfectly unaccountable and inconceivable on any other ſuppoſition but this, that God revealed it to him, or that he had it from thoſe to whom it had been revealed before his day.

The prophecies delivered ſeveral thouſand years ſince, which contained the hiſtory of the world in epitome, the accompliſhment of which has been clearly made out down to our day, furniſh further ſtriking proof of the truth of the divine ſcriptures.

But the moſt forcible and irreſiſtible evidence of the truth of the ſcriptures is the ſublimity and incomprehenſible nature of their doctrines. There can hardly be conceived a more palpable and ridiculous abſurdity than this, that doctrines which the mind of man cannot comprehend ſhould have any other than a divine original. The bible then is a revelation of divine truth. Taking this for an eſtabliſhed truth I will offer ſome tho'ts more immediately connected with the doctrine of Election.

Human depravity is a doctrine of the bible. It is there taught in terms which imply at once its certainty, malignity and univerſality in the moſt pointed manner. It is repreſented as very enmity itſelf againſt God, not ſubject to his law, nor can be. Stronger language is not to be found. Univerſal experience concurs to ſupport the ſcripture account of the matter. The government of God and man appear to have their foundation, and I think only foundation, in depravity. Regulations might be uſeful, probably neceſſary, in a ſociety perfectly holy and virtuous, but coercive and penal laws could have neither place or uſe. The bible throughout ſuppoſes and implies the depravity of human nature, the beſt men have ever acknowledged and lamented it, the hiſtory of the Jews gives ample proof it, but the moſt finiſhed, compleat proof is to be found in the appointment and work of the Saviour.—It is agreed that this depravity has fixed its ſeat in the moral powers of the man principally; but I think we ſhall not err if, we ſuppoſe that a degree of injury or inconvenience reſts on all his faculties. If the heart be by nature oppoſed to the divine government can it be poſſible for it to alter itſelf, to oppoſe its own motions and feelings? The ſuppoſition is contrary to the reaſoning of philoſophers; and abſolutely repugnant to the bible. This depravity of our nature being allowed, one of theſe conſequences muſt follow, viz. That all men will be objects of ſovereign mercy without any regard to the condition ſpecified in the goſpel; or a certain number only, as we are there taught. The current of ſcripture ſeems to me ſtrongly to militate againſt the ſuppoſition of univerſal ſalvation; but thoſe paſſages eſpecially which declare that Chriſt will call all before him to judgment and then make that public and juſt diſtinction between the righteous and the wicked which their reſpec-

tive characters ſhall require, and in conſequence, aſſign to them vaſtly different portions. Salvation then muſt be wholly of grace, and it will follow that God is a ſovereign, and has mercy on whom he will have mercy. And the doctrine of Election as given us in the bible will not only appear to be true, but the thing itſelf neceſſary to the ſalvation of any part of the children of apoſtate Adam. I have gone, you will ſee, upon the ſuppoſition that all the divine acts are reſults of divine counſel, or more properly perhaps, of divine decrees; a truth eaſily demonſtrated, but it will not be neceſſary to ſhow it. I am ſenſible, objections are made againſt the doctrine I have attempted to eſtabliſh; one is that it is irreconcileable with ſome parts of the ſcripture—and it is a bold preſumptuous cavil. Is it poſſible that eternal unchangeable truth ſhould declare inconſiſtent things? Moſt certainly it is not. That there ſhould be difficulties attending the doctrine ought not to be conſidered as ground of juſt objection againſt it. Every thing about us, every thing within us preſents numberleſs unſearchables—abundant matter for difficult inquiry and which, indeed, will forever diſappoint the beſt and moſt thorough human inveſtigation. In God we live and move and have our being. This implies the moſt abſolute, continual and univerſal dependence. This notwithſtanding, we feel ourſelves poſſeſſed of all the liberty neceſſary to render us the proper ſubjects of divine commands, and to make us accountable for all our conduct; nor could we uſe a greater portion of liberty than we now enjoy. Apply this obſervation to the doctrine of Election.—Did ever any perſon feel his liberty impaired by it? Do not ſaints and ſinners act with equal freedom in chooſing their reſpective objects? They certainly do. No man can come unto me (ſays a benevolent Redeemer) except the Father who hath ſent me draw him. Did any one in conſequence of this drawing, ever perceive the leaſt force or compulſion upon his mind? Surely not. That we ſhort ſighted creatures cannot perceive the conſiſtency of the preſent doctrine with other ſcriptures affords no ſolid ground of objection againſt it. On the like ground we might deny the poſſibility of God's making a man. The ſame objection will lie in its full ſtrength againſt the moral government of God; and will lead to downright ſcepticiſm; and poſſibly to that which is more to be dreaded, rooted unbelief. It ought to ſatisfy us to believe and know that God who favors us with his revealed truths perfectly ſees their connection and conſiſtency.

It may be obſerved here, with propriety, that could men clearly diſcern the conſiſtency, and fully comprehend the myſteries of revealed truths and doctrines this of itſelf would remove a main pillar on which the ſpiritual building reſts. It would weaken, it would deſtroy one of the moſt ſubſtantial arguments we have to prove the truth of the ſcriptures. Could men comprehend revealed truths in their full extent and meaning, would they not immediately, and with appearance of reaſon, ſay, is this the revelation which claims divine honors? There is nothing here above what the ſagacity of a Newton or a Locke might have diſcovered. Thanks to God the ſcriptures are divine, ſublime, and incomprehenſible! Beſides, we live by faith. What ground for faith could we ſee every thing!

The difficulty philoſophic minds feel reſpecting the ſcriptures grows out of a miſapplication of their reaſoning powers more than out of the divine oracles themſelves. The proper province of reaſon is to examine the evidence produced in ſupport of the authenticity of the ſcriptures. Having found this evidence ſatisfactory, reaſon has done its work. We have then little elſe to do but believe and obey. This examination will take in both the internal and external evidence of divine truth, and having found no abſurdity, the ſublime truths of the ſcriptures are not to paſs the ſcrutiny of cavilling worms and then receive a contemptuous rejection. This will afford you a ſtriking reaſon why unbelief has marks of divine diſpleaſure ſo pointedly fixed upon it in the goſpel. God has given us clear evidence of the truth of the ſcriptures, and particularly of the coming and work of Chriſt, and commands us on pain of death to give him credit, to believe him. The penalty is not unreaſonable. A man will not patiently take the lie. He that believeth not maketh God a liar!—I hope, daughter, you will not diſpute about the bible doctrines. If you are convinced they are divine writings take them as you find them, and believe them as they ſtand. Their meaning, ſo far as is neceſſary we ſhould know and underſtand it, is generally plain and obvious. Thoſe things in them hard to be underſtood, you need not worry yourſelf with. The doctrine of election is a doctrine of reaſon as well as of revelation, and it will moſt certainly demand your particular acknowledgments to God if you can find any marks or fruits of divine and ſovereign grace in yourſelf.—The bible is deſigned to make us good, not to make us diſputants. If you find your love to God the Father for his precious unſpeakable gift, to God the Son for his matchleſs love to man, to God the Spirit for aſtoniſhing and much abuſed and deſpiſed Grace in arreſting and binding a rebel madly purſuing the road to ruin, daily receiving an increaſing glow, accompanied with greater animation in duty, warmer zeal for God and more operative benevolence to men, rejoice and be thankful. Give him the praiſe to whom it is due; but don't forget that you may be deceived in the view you take of yourſelf if you do not perceive that humility increaſes in proportion to that glow of love I have mentioned.

Religious Intelligence.

The following Letter from the Eaſt-Indies to the Directors of the New-York Miſſionary Society cannot fail to intereſt every friend to Miſſions.

Serampore, Oct. 15th, 1800.

To the New-York Miſſionary Society.

Dear Brethren,

IT has given us much pleaſure to hear that a ſociety has been eſtabliſhed in America for the purpoſe of ſpreading the knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt among the heathen nations which border upon you We moſt heartily wiſh you God ſpeed: we pray that you may have wiſdom from above, to enable you to concert your plans aright, and patience to wait in theſe labors of love till God ſhall give the bleſſing expected.

The various tribes of American Indians appear to have a claim upon the American churches; or rather,

perhaps we may ſay, that one great end of the exiſting of the churches in America is, to ſpread the glorious goſpel among the heathens in their vicinity, It is ſaid, "He 'that believeth, *out of* his belly 'ſhall flow rivers of living water." The ſaints individually are converted, that they may work for God, and glorify him; not merely that they may go to heaven when they die; ſo alſo churches may be looked upon as little emcampments from which we are to ſally out, in attacks on the great enemy, or rather on the kingdom of the great enemy of God and man. You, dear brethren, are now drawing up in battle array—Go forward—Perſevere—Redouble your efforts. Be not weary in well doing: for if you don't faint, you ſhall reap in due time. Undoubtedly you will meet with diſcouragements: many profeſſors of the goſpel may not at firſt enter into the idea that Chriſtians, and all which they profeſs, belong entirely to the Lord, and conſequently may for a time act as if the giving or withholding ſupplies was at their option; others may tire, if they don't ſee immediate ſucceſs, and many may blame your meaſures, after you have done the beſt in your power; but it is your buſineſs to endure all things for the elect's ſakes, that they may be ſaved.

It is now, dear brethren, ſeven years ſince we entered upon the work of the Miſſion in this country, and it is uncertain to this hour, whether any of the heathens are truly converted or not, though there have been many very hopeful appearances, and ſome which were ſo much ſo, that we believed God had begun his work in reality: and the evidences continued for a long time, but at laſt decayed. Yet we ſtill hope of ſome perſons. Were we however to look on the Miſſion in this point of view, we ſhould conclude that nothing had been done to any purpoſe; but when we compare the time of our firſt arrival with the preſent, we cannot help concluding that ſome very important ends have been accompliſhed. Our firſt landing was a formal taking poſſeſſion of the country for God: it was fixing a colony in the ſtrongeſt part of Satan's poſſeſſions. Since that we have been preſerved and increaſed inſomuch that the colony which at firſt conſiſted of only five grown perſons and five children, now conſiſts of ſeven males and five women, evidently on the ſide of God (tho death has removed two of our brethren, viz. Grant and Fountain from us) beſides the children in number ſeven. God has alſo been gracious in the converſion of ſome Europeans, and others. The language has been acquired—the goſpel preached to many thouſands, and the bible tranſlated into the Bengal language: part of the New-Teſtament is printed, and the whole will be ſo before you get this. Some hundreds of copies of Matthew's Goſpel, and ſome other ſmall pecies have been diſtributed and read by many. The ſyſtem of Hindooiſm begins to totter, and even Bramans are in many inſtances aſhamed to avow that their Shaſters are of divine original: ſo that, notwithſtanding all our diſcouragements, and all our want of ſucceſs, we are conſtrained to ſay that the Lord has done great things for us; and it is alſo in our hearts to expect greater. We are indeed rather ſtrengthened than weakened, and though the much deſired ſucceſs has been delayed till now, yet we are all with one heart truſting in the Lord; and I

believe are all diſpoſed to continue in our work till death, and not to be moved with any diſcouragement.

What can we ſay, dear brethren, to encourage you to perſevere in the good work, and to abound in it? Two conſiderations are of great weight with us, viz. 1. Every ſoul is of more value than the whole world: therefore no length of time, or expenſe of treaſure is too great to be devoted to the ſalvation of ſouls; and the effectual calling of one to the fellowſhip of the faith, is more than an ample recompenſe for all that can be given, done, or ſuffered, to accompliſh it. 2. The Goſpel is the power of God to ſalvation; and the publication thereof the ordinary means of delivering ſinners from the power of ſin and Satan. It would be preſumption in us to expect the ſalvation of ſinners any other way; and the height of unfeeling cruelty to refuſe to the heathen world, that which we believe and know to be God's ordinance for the ſalvation of ſinners. The man who keeps that money in his purſe, or employs it in trifling gratifications, which is wanted to ſend the goſpel to them, is guilty of the blood of ſouls; and the man who is furniſhed with gifts for this work, if when encouraged by the Church to devote himſelf to this work, declines it through fear of danger, or love of eaſe, is alſo guilty of the blood of ſouls. Churches not ſeeking out and encouraging ſuch gifts, are in the ſame condemnation. So that this work is as incumbent on every Chriſtian, as any of the divine commands are, and cannot be neglected without very great guilt.

But on the other hand, the example of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who ſpared no pains or coſt to ſend the goſpel of his grace to ſinners; the example of the Apoſtles, who did not account their lives dear, ſo that they might finiſh their courſe with joy, and the miniſtry which they had obtained of God, to teſtify among the Gentiles the unſearchable riches of Chriſt; the intrepidity of the martyrs, who loved not their lives unto death; the promiſes that he that watereth ſhall be watered himſelf, and that Chriſt will ſupport his miniſters in this important work till the end of time; theſe—all theſe are arguments with us, and we doubt not with you alſo, to perſevere in this work; and never, never to give it up—rather to conſider it as a work which muſt not be deſerted; which muſt be perſiſted in; which muſt become more and more common; and which muſt be finally ſucceſsful, and terminate in the univerſal dominion of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt over every kindred, and nation, and people, and tongue.

Dec. 9. Capt. Hague, the bearer of this, has frequently viſited us, and has gone with us when we have gone out to proclaim the Saviour in the ſtreets to the wretched Hindoos. Within the laſt two months our proſpects and hopes have brightened up, and we hope the Lord has revealed himſelf to ſome of the heathens. Five perſons, three men and two women, give us great hope. One has given himſelf up to the church by relating the experience of the grace of God on his ſoul; and we expect that the others will ſoon follow his ſteps. We may be too ſanguine in our joy at this event; but when you reflect on its vaſt importance, you will eaſily excuſe us. We have felt the pain of diſappointed hopes before, more than once or twice: but the firſt true converts muſt appear ſome time;

and appearances ſtrongly encourage us to think that the preſent are the firſt fruits of Bengal to Chriſt.

We take the liberty to preſent to you a copy of the goſpel of Matthew in the Bengalic language, at the end of which are ſome ſmall tracts and hymns, which we have diſperſed pretty widely. Our dear brother Williams, of New-York, will preſent it to you as a token of our hearty concurrence with you in your work, and as a motive of praiſe and thankſgiving to God on our behalf.

We take our leave—pray for us —we pray for you. May we all be ſtedfaſt, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, foraſmuch as ye know that our labour will not be in vain in the Lord.

We are your affectionate brethren in the kingdom and patience of Chriſt.

Signed in behalf of all the Miſſionaries, and by their deſire,

WILLIAM CAREY.

Our readers will recollect we informed them that the Rev David Bacon, ſoon after his ordination laſt winter, commenced a journey to detroit with a view of laboring there as a Miſſionary, and of learning the Chippeway language, that he might go as a Miſſionary among the weſtern Indians. No intelligence has been received from him till within a few days. He got no further than Bloomfield, in the State of New-York, by ſleighing. There he was detained ſeveral weeks and then proceeded on his journey with his wife and her brother, a young man who is to learn the Chippeway language, that he may qualify himſelf for an inſtructor among the Indians. After a very fatiguing and dangerous journey Mr. Bacon and his companions arrived at Detroit the 9th of May laſt. At Fairfield a town on the north ſide of Lake Ontario, he found a ſettlement of Moravians and ſome civilized and chriſtianized Indians.

The following anecdote of two Squaws whom he found at this place is extracted from his letter. "Having occaſion to mention the name of Mr. Brainard, who was formerly a Miſſionary to the Indians, the Moravian miniſters told me that they had two Squaws in their ſociety, who were baptized by him; and that one of them had ſhown them a bible, a few days before which ſhe ſaid he gave her. Recollecting that Mr. Brainard viſited the Delawares, and that theſe Indians were a part of that nation, I credited the report; and was pleaſed to find that ſome of his Indians were not only in the land of the living, but in the very neighbourhood where I was. I immediately ſent for the one who lived the neareſt. She came to ſee me, and appeared very decent, ſenſible and clever. She was conſiderably advanced in years, but did not know her age, as is commonly the caſe with Indians. She ſpoke pretty good Engliſh, obſerved that ſhe was very ſmall when ſhe was baptized by him; and putting her hand out about three feet and a half from the floor, obſerved that ſhe was not more than ſo high when ſhe ſaw him laſt. As ſhe left the place about that time ſhe knew of none of his Indians, but the Squaw that was with her. I had not much opportunity to know whether ſhe gave evidence of grace; but the Moravian miniſters ſuppoſe them both to be Chriſtians; and that they were

'converted under Mr. Brainard's 'miniſtry. May God be praiſed 'for his merciful care of them!"

Mr. Bacon is now at Detroit where he preaches to the people of that place, and will probably be very uſeful as a miniſter, there being no Preſbyterian Miniſter within ſeveral hundred miles. There is a probability that a church will ſoon be formed in that place. Mr. Bacon alſo keeps a ſchool, and under the inſtruction of the public interpreter he and the young man with him are learning the Chippeway language. He has frequent opportunities of ſeing ſome of the Indian chiefs, and there is a pleaſſing proſpect that he will ſoon be made an inſtrument of communicating the light of the goſpel to ſome of the poor benighted Indians.

POETRY.

COMMUNICATED AS ORIGINAL.

MESS'RS. EDITORS,

THE ingenious verſion of the 29th Chapter of the book of Job in your laſt Magazine and the ſuggeſted requeſt at the cloſe has induced me to attempt the following paraphraſe of the ſucceeding Chapter. If it meets your approbation pleaſe to give it a place in your next number. C. R. L.

BUT now alas, mankind commence my foes,
The young the vile deride me in my woes;
Dregs of all fleſh an outcaſt ſavage brood,
Who dwell in caves and roam the waſtes for food;
Of vile deſcent and hateful in their ways,
They feared and ſerved me in my proſperous days,
But now am I their by-word and their ſong,
Reproach and inſult dwell on every tongue.

My countenance which once o'erawed the vile,
Now pale and wan, with ſpitting they defile;
My cord is loos'd, to this vile race 'tis given,
To execute the afflicting will of Heaven.

At my right hand the youth aſſuming ſoar,
And take that place they dar'd not take before.

As ſweeping floods o'erflow the ſpacious plain,
And lay whole fields beneath their watry reign;
So throngs tumultuous compaſs me around,
Inſult my grief and open every wound.
Swift as the winds purſuing terrors crowd,
My welfare flees me as the morning cloud;
With anguiſh deep my melting ſoul is preſt,
Pierced are my bones my ſinews take no reſt;
Loathſome diſeaſe my ſtiffened garments bind,
In filth and duſt my former glories end.
To fill complete my cup of pain and grief,
My heavenly Father to my cries is deaf,
I feel thy heavy hand, thine angry frown
Like wind purſues and melts my ſubſtance down.
Soon o'er my head ſhall death's dark ſtandard wave,
Soon this weak frame ſhall moulder in the grave;
That land of ſilence and perpetual peace,
Where all my woes ſhall end, my ſorrows ceaſe;
Did not my heart with tenderneſs o'erflow,
And weep reſponſive to the ſighs of woe?
I look'd for good but countleſs ills enſue,
For light I waited but the light withdrew.

My bowels boil with keen diſeaſe oppreſs'd,
I mourn in darkneſs with no comfort bleſs'd;
The lonely wood I roam, my ſpirit faints,
The owl and dragon echo my complaints.
My ſkin is black my bones are fill'd with pain,
And naught but ſore calamities remain;
Once harp and organ cauſed my joys to flow,
But now are tuned to melodies of woe.

Donations to the Miſſionary Society of Connecticut.

From Rev. Dr. Trumbull,	- -	Dolls.	11.
Two Strangers,	- - -	do.	2.
Mary Stone,	- - -	do.	7.